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THE ADVENTURES
OF
DOCTOR BRADY.

VOL. III.



THE ADVENTURES
OF
DOCTOR BRADY.

BY
WILLIAM HOWARD RUSSELL,
AUTHOR OF
"LETTERS FROM THE CRIMEA," "MY DIARY IN INDIA,"
"MY DIARY NORTH AND SOUTH," ETC. ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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THE ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR BRADY.

CHAPTER I.

THE MIDNIGHT ATTACK.

As I was folding up my dress coat, I felt the letter which Rose Prendergast had handed me in the pocket, and took it out, half inclined to tear it up without opening it.

“It is,” I ruminated, “some request for help I cannot give ;—well, let us see.” The outer sheet contained another, on which my name and address were properly given. It was marked “Immediate.” Scarcely had I read half-way, when I was flying down the passage to Sir Denis’s room. He was half undressed, and was not a little astonished to see me as I was, and my pale ashy face. I did not tremble for myself. “Read that, sir ! Let us see to the women at once.”

Sir Denis approached with the letter to the candle and read—

“I owe you much. I wish to repay you. Danger threatens one whom we value. I cannot avert it, I fear, but I would cheerfully give my life to do so. I have reason to know an attempt will be made to-night on Kilmoyle Castle by a band of desperate men. No human being but yourself and those who are bound to me as I to them by solemn oaths know of my being here—not even my poor sister yet. I need not tell you to be discreet. If I were to communicate with the police, my life would be the forfeit—my liberty at all events, and to me both life and liberty are necessary for the sake of others. I thought I could have seen you to-day, but am disappointed, and I now send this to entreat you to meet me by Carra-bridge at ten o’clock to-night. You may not recognise me: when you hear a man say ‘It’s a fine night,’ answer, ‘The day will be finer;’ and you will meet one who can enable you to avert a terrible act of vengeance. Together we can do much. You must be at the Castle before eleven o’clock, as the attack will be made at midnight. Let your comrades who have gone to Old Court have a hint by some sure hand to see how they return. But for you and one other there would be

a sure blow struck this night ; and God forgive my treachery to the cause. I sign myself only—YOUR FORMER FRIEND.”

Sir Denis read to the end, and then, without the smallest trace of anxiety in his manner, and with rather more deliberation of speech than was his wont, inquired, “Are we to take this letter, which I suppose is privileged, as a serious communication on which immediate action is necessary? You know from whom it comes, I presume, or you would not come to me at such an hour?”

“I am sure I know who wrote it, surprised as I am. Not a moment is to be lost. We must prepare at once.”

“It is now ten minutes to twelve o’clock,” said Sir Denis, looking at his watch. “Short time to prepare, if that anonymous gentleman be exact. First, let me see all is right here. Do you go to my nephew’s room and tell him I want to see him at once. Make no noise, avoid a scene with the women, and come back as soon as you can.”

Sir Denis was examining a pair of double-barrelled pistols with evident astonishment and anger when I returned with Gerald. “There is mischief afoot,” he said quietly. “Mr. Brady, be this alarm real or false, my pistols have been tampered with, and we

must get ready. They did not calculate on a warning. See, the nipples are plugged!" He began to unscrew them, giving directions calmly all the while. "Go to Cord's room, Gerald; wake him, and tell him to bring up all the arms he can muster here. Then call Martin. Let him examine all the fastenings below at once, and arouse the men-servants quietly. I will look after the natives in a moment or two. We are three, Cords four, Martin five, Petherick six, the servants in the house will make us twelve—why, we're an army! And the black fellows can load if we have to keep up a fire. I am only anxious for the poor girls."

"I will ride off at once to Kilmoyle, sir, turn out the police! give the alarm at the barracks!"

"No, you'll do nothing of the kind. If we are to be attacked at midnight—that is, in five or six minutes—you can do no good, and you would probably be potted on your way. We want every hand on the spot."

Cords, the head keeper, a sturdy Yorkshireman, followed by Martin, soon appeared in the wake of Gerald, who had a couple of double fowling-pieces under each arm. Martin the butler was provided with a blunderbuss and a single-barrel; and the keeper, in addition to powder-flasks and a bag of large shot,

carried his own trusty and rather rusty fire-arm. Sir Denis's valet appeared with an old court-sword and a pistol; and one by one the men came in, till the room was alight with white faces. There were arms enough and to spare collected from all parts of the Castle; but on examining them, the lock of one was wood-bound, there was no flint in the blunderbuss, the ramrod of another was broken, and so on—still, there was a sufficient armament to provide us with weapons to meet an attack on any one spot. The only cause for anxiety lay in the number of ways by which the Castle could be entered. It was a straggling old house, with windows here and there looking out on court-yards and on the lawn and gardens, and there were half-a-dozen doors to be defended. The arms were loaded by Cords, Sir Denis, Gerald, and myself; and were distributed to the steadiest of the domestics, the others being armed with pokers, sticks, or whatever they fancied. A smart stable-boy volunteered to creep out of a window from which he could reach the garden, thence climb the wall, drop into the grove outside, and make his way to a farmer's, where he could obtain a pony and gallop into Kilmoyle to summon the constabulary. The dogs might be depended on to give notice of the approach of assailants, if they came at all. Gerald

believed they would; for he thought they must have heard of Sir Denis's hoarded gold. Sir Denis himself was satisfied, by the tampering with his pistols, that some evil enterprise was possible. But if any one doubted—and certainly I was not one, although I hoped something might occur to prevent the outrage—there could be no room for incredulity, when we saw that the chain of the door of the passage leading from the smoking-room to the tiled walk outside was not on, and that the screws of the lock and bolts had been loosed, so that a push would send it in. The old Hindostanee who had charge of the fastenings declared he had seen every door properly secured ere he retired. It was plain there was treachery inside, but whom to suspect?

Mary Butler and Mabel Fraser sat in Sir Denis's room, with Gerald on the watch outside. "Such a tremendous brick as cousin Mary is!" he exclaimed. "She is not half as flustered as some of the louts there with guns and pistols, and she is trying to make that poor miserable Mab believe there's no danger, just as a mother would encourage a shrinking child to face a hobgoblin."

The Hall was guarded by Sir Denis and one of the servants. Cords was on watch at the back; Martin patrolled the kitchen corridor; other armed

men were put in the rooms on the level of the ground, where the windows might be forced from outside. I was on duty at the smoking-room postern, now secured by the chain and by the screwing home of the bolts and lock.

The clock in the court-yard struck the half-hour, and all was still as the grave outside. My ears were strained to catch the slightest noise, and the ticking of the kitchen-clock sounded along the passage as if it were close to my head. Minute after minute passed; not a stir. As I leant against the door in the dark, my very breathing seemed like a murmur of voices, and the beating of my heart like the slow tap of a drum. Would they come? Was it a false alarm? Had Maurice Prendergast at the last hour succeeded in thwarting the villanous design? Suddenly there ran a chill through my veins. Hish! There could be no illusion. They are here! The wooden step at the postern creaked. My ear was pressed close to the door, and I *felt* some one was outside! Then the handle was turned gently against my heart, as I crouched with my finger on the trigger of my pistol, the bolt grated slightly, clicked, and shot forward again. The door shook very gently. The whisper of voices was audible, as if of men beside me. Again the handle was tried.

Again the door was pressed with an increasing strain! The touch of hands and the rubbing of men's shoulders came through the solid oak to my watchful sense, as though they were on *me*. By the side of the door were two small panes of glass. I could see the stars twinkling outside; the faint light stole in from the open, just showing the dimensions of the window. All at once the stars were shut out—an opaque body nearly blocked out one square of glass. The least movement of my hand would have placed the muzzle of my pistol with but a thin film between it and the ruffian's head. But Sir Denis' orders were positive—no one was to fire a shot for his life till the burglar actually stood before him, or was bursting through door or window.

The signal for help was to be a whistle if any place was threatened. I was just about to force my lips to make the sound when the stars gleamed again, the head vanished from the window, the boards creaked, and the whispering was renewed outside. Then all was silent. There was nothing stirring outside. The dogs were mute. Were the marauders disconcerted by the failure of the access on which they had depended, and would they abandon the attempt, fearing they had been betrayed, and that

the accomplice's work, on which they relied, was discovered? I listened in an absolute agony of suspense. Should I give the signal? Would it not be better after all to show we were on the alert, and avert the attack? Sir Denis however had ordered otherwise. There was a grim determination on his part to surprise the assassins, and to make them rue their work; and he peremptorily rejected Gerald's idea of lighting up the castle and ringing the large bell in the court-yard.

"They will but try again," he said; "and I intend that this attempt shall be their last."

I thought of running swiftly to the Hall for one instant and telling him what I had heard, but the fear that they would make a sudden rush at the door, and force it in a twinkling, whilst I was absent, deterred me. The clock tolled one! Not a sound. Again the seconds ticked on, and the minutes followed in slow procession.

I thought of the brave girl who was watching and waiting too. I would lay down life so cheerfully for a word from her—a hundred if I had them—for one little word from those dear lips. If it would save her a moment of that suspense, I would go forth into the night and brave unknown dangers and all odds of death. What is that? A low, soft whistle from

a distant room ! It is repeated more loudly, and re-echoed near at hand. Sir Denis appeared at the end of the passage, and beckoned to me.

“Cords has whistled twice ! Come !”

“But they have been here too ! They have only just gone.”

“Then keep on your post.”

And he disappeared, and left me in darkness. I returned to the door, with every faculty in such tension, that each seemed to wander abroad and refuse obedience to my mind. Murmurs crept through the night air. There were voices singing in my ears. I heard my own name. It sounded—a woman’s voice—close to my ear, “Terence, darling Terence ! guard me and protect me.” My fancy played me strange tricks, for I saw shapes in the darkness. There were figures and faces, and noises of rustling garments all around me, and lights sparkled out and vanished ; my hands trembled so that I was obliged to uncock the pistol I held, lest I should discharge it.

The whistle !—again !—again !—again ! It came from several parts of the house at once—then the sharp crash of glass, and a report, as when a firearm is discharged from within a house, followed by several shots from outside ! There was a tramp of feet

along the halls and passages, shouts of "This way, all of you!" With an inexpressible sense of relief, bounding away like a dog from the leash at last, I flew towards the fray. There was one more shot fired as I rushed into the back corridor, and, by the light of a candle, borne by a terrified lad, I saw one of the servants bearing a man, whose legs trailed heavily in the passage, and whose head hung down over the servant's arm. My soul sickened as I saw the grey hair.

"Oh, doctor! look to him. Poor Cords, sir! The bloody villains!"

We laid him in the passage; and, as I knelt beside him and tore open his coat, the blood purged out in heavy drops from his neck. He looked up in my face with a smile.

"I dropped two on 'em, for sure, Master! that I did—right and left; but they've done me, I doubt, haven't they, sir?" There was a jagged hole when I wiped away the blood, just below his shoulder-blade, and the ball had passed out behind the neck. It had not lodged, but the wound was enough to kill, I thought. The boy brought me water, and I plugged up poor Cord's wound as well as I could with a piece of linen.

"Don't mind me, Master: let me be. Go off,

all of you, to Sir Denis. There's a lot of the infernal poaching vagabonds. But I've nicked two of 'em—right and left, that I did."

He was carried to his room against his faint remonstrance—"Bring me back, and let me load, for sure I can load, and we'll beat 'em, the murdering poachers!"

In another instant I was in the hall, at the back staircase: a light, screened from the door windows by a pillar, revealed the scene. Sir Denis stood behind one batten, with a pistol in each hand, Gerald, with levelled double-barrel, by his side, watching the broken batten against which a heavy table had been placed. Splinters of wood and glass lay on the floor; the door was pierced with bullets; Martin, below the table, kept his eye on the open space above—one of the men, behind the pillar, was loading a smoking gun—a boy with powder, flask, and ball was handing another.

"Stand clear of the opening, or you're dead!" shouted Sir Denis.

And as I leaped aside towards him, flashes and smoke came through the door, and I felt one ball at least whish by me. My foot tripped, and I fell. There was a roar of exultation outside, through

which I thought I heard a shrill cry ; but I was on my feet in a second. " Not hurt, Sir Denis."

" Do you want any more, gentlemen?" quoth Gerald. " You're not shooting so well this time. Say when you're quite ready, please."

" Why don't you stand out from behind the door, like men, and we'll show you if we can shoot or not?" answered a rough voice outside. " We'll make you warm, you black-hearted members, before we've done with you."

" There will be more of you very cold then, my excellent friends, if you try," replied Gerald. " We hope you'll begin again soon. I am getting rather sleepy."

There was a curse in reply, several shots were fired through the door, and sent splinters over us. No one came in sight of the dreaded opening, at which eight barrels were steadily levelled.

" The firing surely will alarm the people," whispered Gerald. " We must soon be relieved."

" Don't depend on one of the fellows on the estate, your honour," whispered Martin. " They never interfere on such occasions. They're afraid, and they're not willing either."

" I'd get rid of every man of them to-morrow,

Uncle. Don't fire!—it's only a hat on the end of a stick. No good, my fine fellow. Put your head inside it, and try. It will be an easier death than a noose."

We waited and watched again. It was dreadful. There was not a sound. A quarter of an hour passed. Martin lifted his head above the table, and reconnoitred.

"The day is dawning, I'm thinking, Sir Denis," he whispered. "They're off, sir," suddenly he shouted.

"Let us out and pursue them!" cried Gerald. At that moment there came from upstairs a scream so full of terror and anguish that our very blood was still for an instant.

"It is the women! Martin and Tom, don't stir for your lives! Stay you there," shouted Sir Denis; and with incredible activity he leaped up the stairs, followed by Gerald and myself bearing the lighted candle.

As we entered the room, Mary Butler, statue-like, and erect, with her lips apart, was standing alone by the table, with her eyes fixed on the window. The shutters had been burst open: and as we rushed in, a man with a mask or blackened face

was leaping into the room. Sir Denis dashed Mary aside, but as his left hand raised his pistol, he was struck down by a heavy blow—he reeled into my arms—a triumphant yell escaped from the ruffian’s lips—“Come on, boys! come on! I——” And he rolled in a death agony as the room was filled with armed men.

CHAPTER II.

TO THE WAR.

I AWAKE from a painful sleep. The railway accident had just occurred, and I was bleeding, and faint and hungry. Bishopsthorpe is the name of the place, I remember, and this must be Langley Station. I have escaped from Sweatenham. I was running off to London to seek my fortune, when that dreadful smash!—How my head is ringing and my eyes are aching! What dreams I have had! But thank God they were dreams—nothing more!—Who are moving about me now? The little maid and the doctor? They only disturb me and interrupt my thoughts. It is better to sleep on if those dreams do not come again.

I close my eyes and glide away into the state which divides sleep from its fatal sister, from whose embrace there is no awakening. Through the trance I become aware that hands are busied about me, and that I am raised up tenderly. I

feel the surgeon's finger on my brow. I try in vain to recollect when and where I was hurt. Surely I ran from Bishopsthorpe to Langley? And now—now am I dying? Is it impossible to shake off this load of drowsiness—to open my eyes and think? Is it all a dream, that murderous night—are the events which have passed in such long detail through the subtle alembic of the brain vapourous creations of my illness? The Temple and Standish—my escape from the robbers—the duel—the weary marches through Ireland—the return to Kilmoyle—Mabel Fraser—Mary Butler's friend—the Castle—the wild inferno of the crowning agony in which I saw Mary, brave and glorious as some battle goddess in the midst of carnage and horror—yes, all was a dream, thank Heaven! And I would wake up and set out for London, and there toil and work. * * * * * And so dozed away, remembering only that I had suffered fictitious misery, and dreaming that I had dreamt.

How long I lay I know not, but there was a light before my eyes, and a firm hand opened my unwilling lids, and the glare filled my head with pain. I heard a familiar voice: "He is getting on famously—pupils contracting powerfully. I think Dr. Duke will be able to manage the dear

lad without me now." Then I caught such words as "kept very quiet—nourishment—must not speak," and the speaker buzzed away in whispers, in which another joined. There was a door gently closed, and I suppose the doctor went away. In my confused dream, I fancied I was a pupil to a great surgeon in Dublin, and the voice just now was that of my master, as I had listened to it in imaginary lectures. It certainly was not the tone of Dr. Stock, of Langley.

I made an effort to turn, and the movement in the bed attracted the attention of some one in the room; a soft hand was passed over my brow, and then I heard a low sigh, and the breathing of one bending close over me. After a time—how long I can't say—I opened my eyes. Was it night or morning? There was a thick veil between me and the objects on which I sought to fix my attention. By a continued effort, at last I began to make out through the haze certain shapes and figures on the wall towards which my face was turned. Here is another proof of my wandering! I fancy I trace resemblances to patterns on the paper of a well-known room from which I am hundreds of miles away. There is the yellow and red parrot clambering up the thin green spiral, loaded with gigantic purple

apples, to catch another parrot who is doing the same, and so on ; parrots, spirals, and apples, till the last parrot passes half-way into the ceiling, and is lost in a border of black and red lozenges. Let me see—they could not have papered the room whilst I was asleep ? When I went to bed, the room, I remember well, had a plain grey paper. And now these parrots ? they were old friends of mine. Often and often had I gone to sleep staring at them, wondering if I ever should live to go to the land where the originals flourished in the flesh, and take a shot at them for the sake of the lovely plumage. They had for years when I opened my eyes in the morning greeted me with their great bead-like optics, which the designer had made to shine very brilliantly by a clever pip of white. I gazed now till my eyes ached—closed them—reasoned with myself as to the absurdity of my fancies—opened them—it was no use—there they were as before. It was the pattern on the paper in my bedroom at Lough-na-Carra ! Slowly I turned my eyes upwards. I beheld an empty picture frame on the wall ! And then I shuddered, and prayed to God to spare the reason which I feared was about to leave me ; for in this conflict of memories I could not discern that which the senses revealed from the wanderings of

my sickness. And as I muttered my prayers I groaned, and the same hand smoothed my hot brow once more, and I heard a voice whisper—it fanned my ear, and slid gently as it were into my poor head—

“Are you in pain now?”

“Oh yes, very great pain! Where am I, and who are you? Open the curtains, and let me see clearly.”

“Dear sir, you must keep quiet! Compose yourself and ask no questions. Sir Philip gave strict orders that you were not to be permitted to speak. If you ask questions we are not to answer you. But now, as you are awake, it is time to give you your medicine.”

“Sir Philip who?”

“I must answer no questions. Pray, sir, take this. I am your nurse. You must obey orders for the present. Do, and you will soon be yourself again. You are going on so well. May we be grateful to Him for his mercies! Thank you,” said the nurse, as I swallowed unresistingly a spoonful of some fluid. “You will compose yourself, wont you?”

Now it is very easy to say, “you’ll be good,” but it is a very hard promise to keep, and it was more

than I could do when it came to me as a plain matter of eyesight evidence that Rose Prendergast was bending over me; there could be no mistake on that point. Rose Prendergast's eyes were looking into mine, and the square edge of a ridiculous long flapper pendant from a stiff white cap which imprisoned the wild tresses of her dark hair, tickled my cheek, and one hand was still under my head and had raised it so as to enable me to swallow my potion.

“And in the name of mercy will you,” exclaimed I, trying to rise, “tell me what all this is? Where am I?”

But she put her finger to her lips, shook her head, and vanished from the room. And I knew that I lay nigh to the doors of death in my little bedroom in Lough-na-Carra, and that what had passed was not a dream. How often the doctors are wrong! Had their directions been carried out in my case I should have been hopelessly mad. Not to be told where Mary Butler was—not to know how *she* was? Why, I would get up that very instant and see for myself. And by an effort which exhausted all my little stock of strength, I was rising in my bed when the door opened, and as I looked there came in softly—Mary Butler herself!

I uttered a cry of joy, and said I know not what. Mary had one finger on her lip, and as she approached, she held up her little hand monitorially—

“Now, Terence, I’m sure you’ll mind *me*, wont you? It is most essential for you to keep perfectly quiet. Let it be enough to know we are all well. There, do not give way like that; see how weak you are.”

Her hand was in mine. I had burst into tears—my old failing, and could only ejaculate, “Thank Thee, oh God! Oh, thank God!” as I pressed it to my lips. Mary Butler made no effort to withdraw it, but regarding me as a poor, sick, womanish lad, perhaps, sat by my side as I fell back fatigued, still clutching the treasure in my grasp. In low tones she told me how the police had arrived just as the robber band burst into the Castle and were engaged in a dreadful contest with the servants, headed by Gerald, and how Sir Denis had recovered, and was so anxious about me.

“And you see, Doctor Duke, how our patient is,” she said, as that great Æsculapius of the Western kingdom entered, “although we have altered your prescription a little.”

“And indeed, Miss Mary, no wonder!” Doctor Duke said, with his finger on my wrist. “Wouldn’t

the sight of you cure any of us, though it kills us too? Oh, it's the truth I'm telling. There's a pulse! Phew! it's just in flood this minute;—rocks, shoals, and pools—rattling along, and stopping, and sinking.”

Did Mary understand the Doctor's raillery? I rather think, so direct was she, that she little guessed the secret. “I shall leave you with your patient, Doctor Duke. Miss Prendergast and the nurse are in the next room. Good-by, Terence; I will come and see you to-morrow;” and Mary went away.

“She's a Trojan, by Jupiter!” exclaimed Doctor Duke. “No wonder for your blood to be playing leap-frog inside there.”

And he grinned knowingly, and I felt my right hand close with an earnest desire to leave the impress of the knuckles thereof on his very broad and very unintelligent countenance.

How I longed for the next day, and how I lived but for the daily visit! I was patient and obedient to every one now.

My convalescence was rapid; but, alas! I was soon deprived of the physician who had worked such a miracle, as Doctor Duke declared my rapid rally to be. When Mary went away there was an interval in which I seemed to make no progress to-

wards recovery. Sir Denis came with her to bid me good by ere they left for England, and I could not speak before him ; but she said when she was parting from me, "Get well soon, for all our sakes. You know how we all feel for you, Terence ;" and these words comforted me many a time after they had gone. And there was sad news to hear. My dear old guardian, Mr. Bates, who hastened over from the Continent the instant he heard of my condition, by degrees gave me the sequel to what I have told you. A great calamity had fallen on them. The Castle was in ruins ! Mabel Fraser had disappeared ! When the window-panes were broken in and the voices of men heard outside, she gave the wild cry that thrilled us all and summoned us to the room, dashed from Mary's arms and fled.

One of the men on watch near the kitchen passage saw her flying down stairs ; and "I crossed myself," he added, "with the cross of Christ, for the lady was like the dead frightened out of the grave." Search was made in every quarter, but she was nowhere to be found. The ruins were examined ; there was no trace of her, but bones were found in a calcined heap, and—curious ornament for a midnight marauder—a gold seal with a stone, on which there could be made out a

coat of arms partially destroyed by the fire. But presently the fear that she had perished in the conflagration was dispelled by facts which pointed to some forcible abduction. At all events, they afforded strong proof that she had escaped a dreadful death. On the branch of a shrub in a thicket outside the Castle one of the police espied a lock of hair, long and golden. It was Mabel Fraser's beyond all doubt. Examining the ground near at hand, they came on the tracks of two horses' hoofs, which were visible as far as the high road. These appeared as if the riders kept close together, and as if one were far heavier than the other. From the road they had suddenly turned into a field, and the marks could be followed as far as the river, where they were lost.

The sub-inspector of constabulary and his men as they were hurrying towards the Castle, heard the tramp of horses near the wood. And some added that they caught a smothered cry in "a woman's voice;" but there was not a moment to lose, as the shots were ringing through the air, and the little garrison must be hard pressed.

Advertisements were put in all the papers. The next news was from Athlone, where the innkeeper had two fine horses standing at livery. They

belonged to two gentlemen, he said, who came the morning Kilmoyle Castle was burnt—one on foot and the other on horseback—and with them a fair-haired young lady, wrapped all over in a horseman's cloak, whose eyes were very red, and who was on horseback too. It was supposed to be a runaway match. The gentlemen had breakfast, and bought some ready-made clothes, and astonished the dressmakers and millinery establishments of Athlone by paying whatever they were asked. One was a dark little gentleman, the other was a tall thin one, and spoke cross to the lady; and when they drove off, leaving their horses “to be kept till called for next week,” and taking only a bag which they bought to put their clothes into, there was a good deal of excitement in the town on the subject. They posted to the nearest station, took the train for Dublin, and were traced as far as Holyhead, where they became lost in the passengers of the mail train for “all over the world;” and the police could detect them no further, remarkable as they were. Miss Butler's grief was acute, but she kept her feelings under control most admirably. She nursed her uncle night and day, coming over to see me, and looking after Cords and the servants who had been wounded and burnt—“going about,” Mrs. Considine declared, “just like an army of angels.”

The scene in Sir Denis's room was terrible indeed ! When the police entered, they were horrified to see the old baronet, his niece, and myself stretched dead, as they thought, beside the fallen leader of the band, of which another was dying beside the window. Sir Denis, however, had only been stunned ; but, as the villain who struck him down reeled from my fatal shot, he dealt me a tremendous blow with a loaded weapon, and I fell lifeless at Gerald's feet. Mary Butler threw herself between her uncle and the man I shot, and fainted when I fell. The servants hurrying from all parts of the Castle filled the room, and led by Gerald, attacked the robbers with spirit. But on a signal from the outside, they suddenly fled, leaving in the room their leader's body, and a comrade mortally wounded. Gerald and his party sallied out in pursuit of the assassins before the police appeared, but they were speedily recalled by a terrible signal. The light which one of the servants remarked, and which we hailed as that of the dawn, suddenly strengthened and reddened. The Castle was in flames ; not so much the work of accident as of design, so far as could be determined. Although the villains had not fired at Sir Denis, but directed their aim at the servants and at Gerald and myself, they had apparently little scruple as to burning us.

all alive. The old place was full of draughty corridors and passages, the fire gained an ascendancy which could not be overcome by such means as were at hand, and of Kilmoyle Castle, the ancient seat of the Desmonds, all that remained was a portion of a wing, the blackened walls, and the out-offices. Sir Denis and Miss Butler were taken to Kilmoyle Court, the residence of Mr. Casey, and I was carried off to Lough-na-Carra, where my bedroom was given up to me by Mrs. Considine.

Sir Denis, at first inclined to abandon Ireland for ever, finally made up his mind to rebuild the Castle on a smaller scale, but ere he raised a stone of it he declared that Miss Fraser must be found or her disappearance explained.

As to the great outrage itself, not only the county but the country and the United Kingdom were ringing with it. The Government issued a tremendous proclamation and offered a large reward, and the provisions of an act for keeping order in a district which is utterly out of order was at once applied to Kilmoyle and the adjacent baronies. The attack was on a grand scale. It was planned and accompanied by circumstances showing more daring and skill than are usually found in the plots of mere agrarian offenders. The Castle dogs were

poisoned—each was dead and stiff in its kennel. Then, again, when Major Bagshaw and all his Bengal Tigers were coming home in good humour from a fine dinner at the Right Honourable the Earl of Bellbrook's, their carriages were stopped by a body of men who sprung over the walls on both sides of the road so suddenly that the gallant gentlemen could not even open the doors. No violence was offered, and the fellows let Bagshaw mount one of the coach-horses and start for Kilmoyle. Their object was that the police should be summoned out of the way, and a long ride the Castle stable-boy had ere he came up with them.

“And where is Gerald now?”

“Don't you know? I forgot to tell you. Why, Gerald is with the regiment. There is great news, my boy. You must join head-quarters at Cork! There's war with Russia! The Guards have gone to Malta. The Army Medical Department have written to say you must be invalided or join within ten days. There have been no end of certificates and Boards about you, and you none the wiser, or they either; but Dr. Duke thinks you'll be able to start in a week at farthest.”

CHAPTER III.

EASTWARD HO !

SUNSET at sea—a deep-blue sea—sailless and silent, for the wind has sunk to a sigh, and the ripple scarce laps the iron sides of the ship which is cleaving through the placid water. The sky is cloudless, save in the west, where long narrow belts like fiery swordblades bar the rays of the sun as it sets behind a distant mountain-top rising out of the ocean on the horizon.

“Soldiers ! merrily march away ! soldiers’ glory
Lives in story ;
His laurels are green when his hair is grey,
And it’s oh ! for the life of a soldier.”

The men had been trained to sing together, the bandmaster had picked out the best voices, and the effect of the chorus as it was taken up by the soldiers forward and rolled in a storm through the evening air, might have made an opera conductor envious. And to see the honest fellows, with

staring intent eyes and open throats, carolling away, and to think there were among them such awful grumblers and some malingerers, and some who did not care much for glory or laurels, or for anything but an easy life and strong drinks—why it was to feel the power of song. They were going, good lads, in the highest spirits, to fight for the Sultan of Turkey, in the firm belief that his enemy, of whom they heard for the first time, one Nicholas, Czar and “Imperator” of all the Russias, would immediately retire when he learned the Bengal Tigers were coming. How many of those voices could have quavered out a note in a short twelve months from that time? How little any of us, from General Sir George down to that jolly little drummer whom I beheld in the front of the column, with blanched cheeks rat-ta-tatting away on the high road to the Alma Post Station, and again with his dull eyes staring right up to Heaven, and his fair hair clotted with the blood of his death wound—Ah, well! he escaped much. Let me go on and declare that not one of the wisest knew a whit more than any of the most foolish of the tremendous ordeal of battle on which they were setting forth that day.

“That ’ere is Mount Hathos,” explains the second officer of the *Colchis* to Lieutenant-Colonel Bagshaw,

who is leaning over the bulwark and thinking of Gazettes and of his secret grievances at the hands of his unknown persecutor ;—" a rummy place, too ! I've bin there and seen the monks—bless you ! just like rabbits in a warren."

" Oh ! that's Mount Athos, is it ? Thank you, Mr. Dobbs ; I'll just mention the fact to the General."

And Bagshaw, adjusting his stock, approached the after-part of the quarter-deck, where Lieutenant-General Sir George Brown was standing a little apart from his staff with a telescope under his arm, engaged in a minute inspection of the proceedings of the card in the binnacle. Sir George was a well set-up handsome old man, with a fine broad pair of shoulders, small waist and slightly in-turned knees, whose carriage and bearing made him look younger than he really was. He wore a uniform cloth cap with a general's gold-lace band, a blue frock coat with gilt buttons, velvet collar and cuffs and gold lace, and tight uniform trousers, with lace down the sides, strapped over patent leather boots, which indeed had been garnished with regulation gilt spurs till practical experience of the difficulty of evading entanglements with ropes and the like had led to their temporary " leave of absence." It

was a pleasant face — a fresh-coloured, clean-shaven face, with a small gray regulation whisker cut abruptly off at the proper line with the tip of the ear, and a smooth clear skin like a surface of enamel, blue eyes, which seemed piercing and keen and yet had not much power of vision, and a well-cut, resolute mouth and chin. He was much braver than his sword. That implement would and could run away if it were attached to a pair of legs disposed to give it such initial velocity. It would break probably—if Wilkinson or some such expert had not tested it in its first essay with a good piece of steel—or it might bend if needs were, for all I know. But I am quite sure Sir George would neither run away nor break nor bend. And yet to be at the head of an army he was no more fit than the three feet odd of tempered metal in a brass sheath which was lying in a neat oil-skin beside his cocked-hat-case in the cabin downstairs.

For he had never commanded in his life—he had served always—served a man of iron will who gave orders and took no counsel—who initiated everything and had no familiars—who inspired confidence and never gave it. And it is not in the life of man or in his nature to carry “Ich dien” for years on his crest and suddenly to assume the

baton and say "I order." No platitude so great as that which declares the best way of learning to order is to be much ordered first. Sir George had been so drilled and so ordered—so besat upon and so bureaucrated that his sole idea of safety in the exercise of command was to hold fast to the regulations and to the warrants—his law and his prophets, and to let the waves pass him as they listed. He was like Béranger's old soldier—"Pour moi, j'ai servi le grand homme;" and as the evidence of his service he had the consoling words of his master, the assurance of the regulations and of the warrants, and the approbation of his own conscience. On the present occasion he wore, in testimony of the faith that was in him, a patch of black court plaister, about three and a half inches long by half an inch broad from the angle of his jaw upwards; for it happened at 7.30 A.M. yesterday that the sea was vexed by winds, and the razor of the excellent general, undeterred by any consideration for the result, had conspired with his legs and with the good ship *Colchis* to inflict on him a gash which needed such surgical appliance. Sir George was surrounded by his staff, as the sun is waited on by his satellites. They were just the planets which could revolve, and do not much more.

But they would, one and each and all, die in revolving if it were necessary. There was Colonel Mulligan—a dear, bland, charming old Horse-Guards creature, more Hibernian in name than in nature—who was going forth to war very much in the same way that he would go to a large evening party, and who would look on a battle as he would on a rubber in a side room—quite an accidental pleasure, in which he might win or lose, but could not get much on the wrong side anyhow. There was a great, fine, vigorous young Briton—a man and a soldier every inch of him—Hailwell—full of zeal, animal spirits, appetite, and courage—unversed, of course, in war, and much persuaded it was like a pic-nic—in which you were to take the enemy's tree and camping ground by a rapid advance direct. There was another jolly young Briton and gallant soldier, Appleson—the General's aide-de-camp, and nephew—it was a great time for nephews—they were on "Uncle's staff" everywhere—who would have been a capital aide-de-camp to any one. And there was Tippleson and little McFatty, not forgetting my own chief, as I regarded him, best of soldier doctors—greatest of military medicine men, the simple, crafty,* sturdy McPhillip—big of heart and large

of limb, honest and bold, but full of ambition and of settled purpose. They were seated or standing round their chief, who was swaying to and fro on the deck near the binnacle, as far from the chorus and the singers as he could well be, and rather doubting in his mind "if the Duke would have liked it." But the Countess of Hayrake was there—one innovation—and there were rifles on board—another innovation—and there were percussion caps—another innovation—and there was a newspaper correspondent—a Revolution! And so he did not know what to make of it all. Yes, indeed—Lord Hayrake, a captain in a regiment of which we had a detachment on board—a peer with God knows how many quarterings, whose ancestors had held their own against Bruces and Douglasses and Grahams, and who had the sole right of bearing a bowl of hippocras to the Queen on her wedding night, as Hereditary Hippocraster of Scotland—had by his side his fair and brave young wife, who knew as little of what was coming as Lord Aberdeen, or the Emperor Nicholas, or Sir George himself. Mrs. Malony, my servant's wife, assured me that "all the women ov the redgment would fight like divils if the countess would lade them, and they'd all die for her, the darlin', that

minit, saysick as they wor.” Well, the women would not have had the crown of martyrdom all to themselves in such a cause.

“ I beg your pardon, General,” said Bagshaw : “ but that is Mount Athos we see over there.”

Now Sir George did not like Bagshaw ; he thought he had got on too fast in the service, and he had conceived an erroneous idea that Bag. privately cultivated the use of tobacco. Besides, Sir George could not see Athos ; and if he had seen it, he would not have cared, for Athos was to him just as much as the violet in the grass plot by the fountain’s brim was to the person who thought it was what it was. Besides, Bagshaw’s coming to him in that way was a sort of assumption that he, Sir George, did not know Athos was in sight long ago.

“ Well, Colonel Bagshaw ! Supposing it is ; what is that,” said Sir George, “ what is that to *you* ?”

Now, if the General had asked Bagshaw, “ What is that to me ?” B. might have got out of it. But to be asked what was Mount Athos to *him*, was a terrible blow. He could not honestly say that Mount Athos was anything to him (particularly as he did not know much about it, and the sun had by this time sunk behind it). He could not aver he was anything to Mount Athos ; and

he was besides met by an hypothesis that it might not be Mount Athos at all; so he felt he was in a wrong position without seeing how he was to get out of it, and that he was snubbed before the young men besides; but Bagshaw was a brave man; and as there was a pause in the new chorus of—"We'll tame the Roosian bear, and we'll make ould Nic'las stare"—he settled his chin in his stock again, and replied—

"I beg your pardon, Sir George. But it's a very strong place—Xerxes, you know, and Alexander. It's on our left flank—deuced ticklish if the enemy moved down on it."

"No use! plunging fire!" muttered our old Engineer Colonel, as if to reassure his chief. "The Russian engineers are not very strong. They never threw up works to oppose the French."

Bagshaw withdrew under a fresh outburst of—"We'll tame the Roosian bear, and we'll make ould Nic'las stare"—and made up his mind then and there never to impart any species of information, moral, religious, physical, military, or political, to his Divisional General, and went down to read "Maunder's Geographical Dictionary," and to await his game of chess with McPhillip.

"I wonder how Sir George can be so savage,"

observed Standish to me, as we stood by the bulwark; "he is such a kind-hearted old fellow. When he was between decks yesterday, through my window I saw him talk to one of the men's wives, who was crying over the sick child you had left. He gave her a tip, and he passed the cabin with his eyes full, and his lips working as if he could have joined her, poor soul."

For Standish was on board. He had come armed with authority to take a passage as we embarked at Malta; and glad was I indeed to see his face, sad as it was, once more.

"You see, my dear fellow," he said, "I could not help it. My newspaper went smash, and with it all my little fortune—all the scrapings off the bottom of Pandora's box. The editor of the *Hercules* got leave from Lord Hardinge to send me out to Malta, and then to come on, and the brave little woman at home and the two bairns must be left—as many a wife and child are left—for their own sakes. But I've promised not to stay more than a few weeks. The war wont last long. If it does I shall be starved, for I am assured I can get no food; and Sir George was good enough to tell me the only man to look after me would be the Provost Marshal."

And so we chatted together till the night was wasted, and the sun was heralded by a faint glow which lighted up on our right the faint outlines of the Troad, and we went to sleep as the British bugles woke the echoes on the shores which had once echoed to the battle-clang of the Homeric hosts, and had seen the valorous deeds of Diomed, the courageous constancy of poor Hector, and the exulting insolence of the Hellenes. Oh ! would that the Trojans had driven them howling to the ships, and to the sea ! We might have been saved a "question d'Orient," a Greek kingdom, a Crimean war.

CHAPTER IV.

GALLIPOLI—OUR LANDING.

ONCE more our bugles sounded. This time at nightfall, waking up the echoes of the Dardanelles, and startling the Turkish sentries dozing beside their great guns in the ancient forts and rousing them into puzzled inactivity. The thumping of the engine and the thudding of the screw have ceased, and the anchor has splashed into the water, and the cable has rattled down after it through smoking hawseholes. Boats alongside—ladders down—the troops drawn up on deck—Sir George in spurs once more—the staff radiant around him. Away to shore boat after boat; then land on the beach or decaying jetties of Gallipoli, from the highest minaret of which floats a tricolour. The town is already French. The Turks in baggy breeches like huge knickerbockers, with dirty turbans, sit cross-legged on the benches in front of the

dingy sheds by the water-side. They evidently don't understand it. The Greeks in baggier breeches, like petticoats with a seam between the legs, stand at the corners of the streets in dirty skull caps, and evidently understand just as much as the Turks. There is a "Commandant du Port" (his "bureau" is the only decent cabin on the beach), who thinks Sir George and staff and troops are allowed to land merely in consequence of the goodness of the Emperor. And there is "Colonel Commandant de Gallipoli" who looks at us out of his telescope from the window of the best house on the quay with an air of considerable surprise as the men under old Bag. and Tiny Potts, the adjutant, form up in column, and after muster march away up the strand with the band playing "The girls we've left behind us." The said "girls," headed by Mrs. Malony, are already engaged in mercantile transactions with the native traders, and seem to be getting the best of the deal, but their lords and masters are not so fortunate.

"There's not a blanket ! nor a tent ! nor an ounce of medical stores !" exclaims McPhillip in great wrath. "No quarters for the men—no commissariat ! And Sir George says it can't be helped, and that the Consul must look after it. It's too bad.

There are more than thirty sick on my list, and no quarters for them, nor an idea of one."

Meantime the column was trudging away merrily through streets which looked very like the courses made by wintry rains, the houses being mere banks of baked clay pierced with latticed holes, now and then lighted up by gleaming eyes. We were bound for Bulair, a long march away, where we were to cut a great trench to prevent the Russians, who were up on the Danube, making a skip over the Balkans skirting Constantinople, and popping down on the Dardanelles to command the passage, and so checkmate the allies. Bagshaw, freed from Sir George, with a Deputy-Commissary-General, a Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, a Captain of Engineers, and two subs and an acting aide-de-camp all to himself, was magnificent and tremendous as temporary Brigadier, and conducted his march with all proper precaution.

"They shan't catch us, Wilmot," he growled, "as the Poldoodies caught us under Grimshaw in the Catterwally Pass. No, by Jove! You remember who saved us then? And to this day, sir, owing to some secret influence, I've never had the Poldoody medal. It's a confounded shame!"

All this while the Tigers were advancing on

Bulair, with skirmishers in front, columns in deploying distance, Bagshaw and "staff" between the leading company and skirmishers. A windmill which rose on the undulating horizon was reported by the advance to be occupied, and the halt was sounded whilst Bag. sent on to the skirmishers to advance carefully.

"In war we can't be too cautious. How do *we* know who are or who may be in that windmill, eh?"

"They're little men in blue coats and red breeches, Colonel," quoth Wilmot, looking through a gigantic deer-stalker. "One of them is smoking; I can see him quite plain. They must be French."

"Must be, sir!—why must be? Do you think the Russians are not up to tricks? Send to Captain Nash to halt the skirmishers and load. He will advance steadily, reserving his fire till he receives fresh orders."

These belligerent dispositions were frustrated by an advance of a few yards more, which enabled us to look down into the little valley at the base of the windmill. A French regiment was encamped by a stream, on the sides of which their little tents were pitched, and from below came the clatter

of voices, the refrain of song, and many a spiracle of smoke from the cooking-fires. Bagshaw had just time to call in Nash's skirmishers, as they crowned the ridge. As we passed the rivulet and skirted the camp of the 4th Infantry of the Line, the band struck up "*Partant pour la Syrie*" They came to the side of the path, looking at us with a curiosity quite equal to our own, whilst the drums rolled and ruffled their salute to our colours, and the guard over the eagle at the Colonel's tent turned out and presented arms.

"*Vivent les Anglais!*" cried the red-breeched dapper crowd; "*Vive rosbif! Vive la vieille Angleterre!*"

"*Bono Francis! Bono!*" grunted the Bengal Tigers, who had learned French in Malta, in one lesson.

Down from the windmill advanced a big Gaul, with several stripes of gold lace on his kepi, and as many to match on the sleeve of his frock-coat. He was followed by a few of his officers, who had been reconnoitring us, and seemed mightily amused. It so happened that at this moment Bagshaw halted to watch the rear company and to keep his eye on stragglers, and that Deputy Commissary-General McPhin was riding after the band. McPhin looked

every inch a brigadier-general. He had a gold band to his cap, he had velvet collar and cuffs to his coat, he had gold twist on his shoulders; he wore a tremendous sabre; no broader gold stripe ever decked pantaloons, nor bigger spur ever decorated knight's heel; and over and above all that and these, the good gentleman—and he was good and brave as any Philistine of them—bore on his ample breast the Ashantee medal with two bars, the Caffre medal, the Gold Coast cross, the Lagos star, the China medal, the order of St. Lazarus of Chili (where he had given a large contract once on a time), and St. Didymus, in diamonds, and was portly and imposing to look upon.

“Permettez-moi, Monsieur le Général,” began the Frenchman, courteously saluting; “de vous prier——”

“Bono Francis!—bôno!” interrupted McPhin, with a wave of his hand. “Allons, allons!”

“J’ai l’honneur, Monsieur le Général,” continued the Frenchman, somewhat disconcerted.

“Oui, oui! Commissary-Général,” ejaculated McPhin, “vous savez. Pas Général de tout.”

“Mais de ce brigade au moins, n’est ce pas, Général?” continued the Frenchman, “je suis le Colonel de Tranche Longueville, du 4ème régi-

ment, à vos ordres. Auriez-vous la bonté, Monsieur le Général, de vous donner la peine——?”

Fortunately Bagshaw and staff came up at this moment, and Wilmot, who was a capital Frenchman, made all straight, and McPhin was relegated to obscurity. There was a halt, and a “*Vin d’honneur*” at the windmill, and we marched off again, after Colonel de Tranche Longueville had given full expression to his convictions that there would be great difficulty in working in the field, if we insisted in giving our commissariat officers galons d’or on their caps, and making them look like generals. “It comes, I suppose,” he added, “from the importance you others attach to your eating,” nibbling, as he spoke, at a souvenir of Toulon, in the shape of a stick of chocolate, “but it is sufficient to distract.”

We made our adieux just as the men on both sides were beginning to fraternize; and, as the Tigers resumed their march, the general opinion was rather in favour of the 4th of the Line. “They’re nate pleasant fellows, as far as I could make out their langedge, Bill; but I wonder why they wear them red trousers?”

“For the same reason we wear red coats, I suppose. They’re like ourselves turned upside down.”

“Boys! did ye see the officer in petticoats—an elegant lady in uniform,” asked another, “with the little kag of spirits?”

“Oh! troth and I did, and got a drop from her too. Six petticoats she had on. She’s a good iday of taking care of herself, though she was liberal, I wont deny.”

With renewed “*Vivent les Anglais!*” and “*Bono Francis!*” we were off once more, and in an hour or so, from the fold of an undulating field, there came in view a small curve, in which the blue sea had embayed itself, chafing against the rocks in a white surf. The sun was sinking downwards towards a bank of clouds, which hid the opposite coast from view, and there was a warm heavy wind springing which set the old fellows looking upwards.

“Rain before night, I’m thinking,” observed Bagshaw to Potts, “and no tents, nor, I may add,” he continued, “any particular shelter to speak of.”

The Colonel was quite right on all points, there was rain, there were no tents, and there was no shelter. Such rain! It was a river turned through a sieve of clouds, and there were the Tigers, very much cowed by it, without fire enough to keep a pipe alight, and soaking great coats all in rows, like

furrows in a field, whilst Captain Tangent, of the Royal Engineers, and his devoted sappers taped and traced out the works which were to render the isthmus Russian proof. There were no supplies. McPhin's carts had not come up. But man sometimes lives on Hope, which has a light refreshing cuisine of her own. The storm abated after a little, when it had made every one as wet as he could be, and then we had time to express our opinion that it was "a confounded shame" to inveigh against Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General McPhin, and to pity ourselves thoroughly, before we sank to rest, somewhat vexed of centipedes, which the rain had driven out of their lurking places. And so we reposed till morning, with the "all's well!" of our sentries, and the bayings of the dogs belonging to a distant village in our ears. An instalment of tents for the regimental staff arrived in the early morning, soon followed by the baggage of the regiment. Six sheep, and a scraggy ox, with tremendous horns, whose agricultural labours ought to have spared him from such a fate as was in store for him, came up under escort to McPhin, accompanied by sacks of flour, and simple necessities of that sort; and when Bagshaw returned from a clever reconnaissance, with two companies, in which he picked

up a good deal of mud and not the least information, he was quite pleased with our prospects. "Here you are, Brady; there is no rest for the doctor," said Tiny Potts, handing me an official "O.H.M. Service," with "P.M.O." in the corner. It was in fact an order from McPhillip, to report myself at once to him, in Gallipoli, when Surgeon Squills, who was on his way up, had arrived to take charge of the regiment. "Lucky fellow! to get out of this charming place so soon." Sickness had broken out already among the men quartered in the town.

CHAPTER V.

STANDISH'S ADVENTURE.

THAT evening I was riding down the squalid, narrow, tortuous lane, bordered by tenements of wood and clay, with latticed windows, which formed the main street of Gallipoli. All the doors were fastened up, and the windows closed. Chalk marks here and there indicated the quarters of officers. No inhabitants were visible, but as my pony went neighing down the dusty path, I could see eyes peering through the lattices. I was bound for the quarters of my "P.M.O.," but there was no one to ask. If there were, what language was I to adopt? Malony, who followed with my traps and medical equipment, was not a very learned person either. As I was looking about, riding still on, and twisting and turning, my name was called—

"Brady! My dear Terence, where the deuce are you going?"

I looked up, and there was Standish at a window

—the drawing-room floor—just within reach of my hand.

“Get off for a minute, and come in and see me. Kick at the door while I shout, and mother Papadoulos will let you in. I can’t come, for reasons I will explain.”

I knocked and kicked, and Standish shouted, and there was presently an undoing of bolts, and much speech in the harshest of all languages—modern Greek—and the door was at last opened by a trembling old woman, in a short jacket and breeches, and yellow slippers, with plaited hair adorned with some scanty coins, to whose skirts hung two children, bright-eyed and long-haired. I entered a dark vault-like place—the parlour—filled with large earthen jars, which put me in mind of “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves,” and with some miserable articles of furniture just visible by the light of a little oil lamp burning before a picture of a saint against the wall. There was a donkey in one corner, and I heard the grunting of a pig from the other, and a clucking and quacking attracted the attention of Mr. Malony, who put in his head and asked with much emphasis, “Haven’t we a right to take any poulthry we like, sir? Oh, begorra, that’s a nate slip of a pig as ever I saw.”

Mother Papadoulos escorted me to the foot of a very creaky and ladder-like staircase, which rose to the ceiling, direct up to a trap-door. I ascended, and as I got to the level of the floor above, my eyes glanced round the apartment in which Standish was waiting to receive me.

The room was about fifteen feet square ; the walls of clay, the planks in the floor wide apart, the clay ceiling discoloured by rain, and the latticed windows without glass. At one end was a sort of platform, raised a few inches from the ground, on which there was spread a piece of old carpet and a great coat. This was the 'divan.' A revolver hung on a nail in the wall. A deal box was in one corner, a saddle in another. There was no chair, no table ; and as I entered Standish rose from a portmanteau on which he was sitting. He was dressed in a shooting-jacket, long boots, and a flannel shirt which hung over them like a kilt ; his face was unshaven and his moustaches were in early stubble.

We interchanged greetings, and I had a hearty laugh at his appearance.

" Yes, indeed," he said. " Laugh and stare, my lad. You may well stare. Here I am, with all ' the horrors of war ' on me—pillaged, sacked, and ravaged. I will tell you all about it. To begin with.

After I saw you off, I made an attempt to procure quarters, but the French, who were here before us, secured nearly every house in town. I could get nothing to eat, and my baggage was not landed, so I went back to the *Colchis*, had a good dinner, and was fast asleep when, early next morning, I was awakened by the captain to say they had signalled to him from shore to start back at once for Malta. It was blowing like fury right down the Dardanelles. No one would fancy such a sea could get up in so short a time. We were as far from the shore as the captain could well put his ship, as is the fashion of all captains, and the skipper explained to me that if he sent off a boat to shore against such a current and breeze he would have to wait, and would get into a row. "I can put you on board that brig close at hand," says he, "and you can easily get a boat from them." So away I went, with my portmanteaux and a case or two of provisions from the ship stowed in the gig, and short as the distance was it tried oars and arms, and we took in as much spray and water as was good for us. The brig, which was light, strained at her anchor, and rose and pitched, I can tell you; the mate ran the gig under her counter, and we looked out for a

rope, hailing like men, but all in vain. So we pulled up towards the bow, and there we saw a rope dangling over the side. I laid hold and was scrambling up, when it was, I believe, let go by some one on deck, and down I came with a run; and it was a mercy I didn't go plump into the sea between the vessel and the boat, but I was just caught by the sailors, who laid hold of the rope and hauled on it till it came taut. You see I've picked up some fine words anyway on board ship. Up I went again, and this time got right on the bulwarks and dropped on the deck. One of the sailors came up after me, to get up my things. Not a soul to be seen on board. I felt uneasy at the thought of being left alone, but they were hauling up my goods and chattels as fast as they could, and before I could decide on what was to be done the sailor joined his comrades, and the boat was flying back with stream and wind towards the *Colchis*, whose screw was already working, as her cable came in, bringing up the anchor. I looked round and shouted. There were my boxes and my worldly goods and myself—nothing else. I made my way aft towards the companion, pushed back the hatch, and was about going down with an 'Any one below there?' when my arm was grasped in a strong grip, and

looking round I saw as ugly a looking scoundrel as ever I beheld, staring at me from under his bushy eyebrows out of his villain eyes, as though he would frighten me ; he was a short, squat, square-built chap, with a red nightcap, rings in his ears, a scarlet shirt, trousers rolled up to the knees, bare legs and feet, and he had an enormous knife in a belt round his waist. I shook off his grasp and put my hand towards my belt, in which, under my pea jacket, I carried my Colt, and said in French, "I want to speak to the captain. I require a boat to put me ashore, and will pay well for it."

"Sono Greco ! non so Francese."

I mustered up all my Maltese Italian to explain what I wanted, but the fellow did not understand me. As I attempted to go down the companion he seized my arm once more, and made a signal with his disengaged hand which brought four of his comrades from Lord knows where to his side—a more frightful, ill-favoured set of dogs you couldn't find out of the galleys—armed to the teeth, haggard, hungry-looking, and desperate.

"I want to speak to your captain," I exclaimed, "and I will do so," and with a violent and sudden effort I shook off the grip of the fellow who held me. The vessel gave a pitch at that moment, and

the next I was rolling down the companion, and came bang against the legs of a man who was tumbling out of a berth in a very dingy caboose, barely lighted by a little swing lamp. I suppose he thought he was boarded by pirates, or Lord knows what, for ere I could rise he had placed a very cold, hard circular tube end-on to my eyebrow. In a mixture of French and Italian I was trying to explain who I was and what I wanted, when the fellow broke out in English, something like your own, my dear Terry—

“ You come on board my ship without my leave, and you ask me for a boat, and you think I will risk my men’s lives for your filthy gold. Begone with you ! In ten minutes I’m away to Scio—Syra—God knows where ; and you may get out of the ship as you came. Begone, I say.”

I was utterly perplexed. The fellow was a resolute-looking young man, rather handsome ; though he had a scarred face and an ugly expression. His look was full of fury.

“ I am at your disposal, sir,” I said. “ It never entered my head that I was doing anything to excite such anger when the captain of the *Colchis* proposed my boarding you for a boat, and we hailed repeatedly.”

“Yes! oh yes! of course,” he exclaimed with a bitter sneer. “You English are lords of the world. You go where you like, do what you like, enter men’s ships or castles or lands, rob, plunder, and appropriate, and all the world is to be at your beck and call. Why am I here?” he shrieked—“why am I here now? Because your cursed race have ruined me! I was loading a cargo at Odessa when your admiral, or whoever he is, issues his ukase—he pronounces his dictum—there is a blockade established in the name of civilization and Turkey. Great God! You come to fight for the Turks. I had to run, leave my cargo for which I had paid—paid my all—and come away with the miserable crew who are beggared, and now you, one of you, dare to come on board my ship and ask for a boat! D—n! If my ship had not cleared out of the Bosphorus yesterday, and if she is not out of the Dardanelles to-morrow, you might make a transport for British troops of me. Up on deck—out of my sight—or you are a dead man!” The fellow’s rage was perfectly demoniac. At one time the idea of shooting him as a dreadful alternative to being shot flashed across my mind. Certainly it would have precipitated matters, but it was as well I did not try, as my pistol had been

stolen out of my belt. I felt helpless. Perhaps my mute gesture of resignation touched the fellow. "You need fear nothing from me," he continued. "But expect nothing. You may get from my deck as you came to it. In ten minutes we are off. You'll find yourself in queer company, and engaged in odd work if you stay, I promise you. And now, sir, once more, out of my sight, or it may be worse for you."

As I gained the deck, the crew were busy round my baggage. My bottles were making them merry, as they made free with them, and my portmanteaux and boxes were open and rifled. There was an anxious glance to ascertain if the captain was following me, and when they saw I was alone, they resumed their work. I was angry and rash. I dashed in among them shouting "Thieves, leave my things alone!" and dealt shrewd blows for England, brandy, preserved provisions, and my kit; but the odds were against me. I was pinned by the legs, and thrown against the bulwark by the gang, and the first villain I had seen, seizing me by the throat, aimed a blow at my breast with his knife. I declare I thought in an instant of all manner of things connected with wife and children, and all that sort of matter, and saw the paragraph about

myself in print, but the brig gave a lurch, and the blade quivered in the bulwark, cutting the skin of my arm. In another second the thrust would have been repeated no doubt, but the captain rushed among them, and with blows of his fists and kicks and shouts, arrested the scoundrels. He abused them roundly I can tell you, but the drink had made them sullen. "I have told them that they shall do you no harm on board. Make a bargain with them for a boat. I will not order them to risk their lives. Look quick about it. What is done can't be undone, but you may ransom your clothes. You are an Englishman, and you are sure to have gold." Addressing a few words to the sulky brutes, among whom there was only one man who was not cut-throat all over, he went aft once more.

"Eh ben, Signor! quanto darette per un' barca?" asked the matc. I offered a napoleon: the dogs laughed outright. They sniffed round me as they haggled in all sorts of languages, and I foolishly, perhaps, raised my offer to five napoleons. "Offer us one hundred and see what we'll say. It's a devil of a time! Great sea—bad boat—long row!" Just as we were bargaining, in mortal fear on my part, a schooner, with French colours flying, came

sweeping down towards us gathering in her canvas, and in a minute or two let go her anchor and brought to between us and Gallipoli, about a quarter of a mile or more away. The sight encouraged me; I knew not why.

“Come,” I said, “this is my last offer. I will give you five napoleons to row me to that schooner. I will make no complaint against you for your theft, but more I will not give; and if you detain me you shall rue it all your lives.”

“Pay us now, then,” said the mate.

I carried my gold in a canvas bag attached to a belt close to my body. I had about eighty napoleons; and as I drew forth the bag, the sight and chink of the coin were too much for the rascals. The mate made a snatch at the bag, but I was too quick for him, and making a dash past them I leaped upon the fore-castle and ran to the bowsprit, on which I got out as far as I could hold myself, exclaiming, “Never, villains! I die sooner.” I put my arm round a stay and waved my pocket-handkerchief. It flew out in the breeze and the salt spray plashed into my teeth and eyes. I held on, still with an eye on the savages, who were muttering under the lee of the fore-castle and planning to circumvent me. But they were soon set to other work.

The captain appeared again on deck. Without deigning to take notice of me he gave orders to his crew, and the fellows, joined by a couple of hands who were roused up from below, began to heave on the windlass, and as the strain of the cable told on the bows, higher and higher flew the spray over and about me as I held on to my slippery friend. There was no sign of life in the schooner, no recognition of my frantic signals. But Providence was so ordering things, that, without saying Heaven at that moment sent a man-of-war up the Dardanelles specially to save me, I was saved. From what I know not! Right in the teeth of wind and stream came in its immense grandeur and strength a British two-decker. My boy! I tell you I nearly let go my hold as she came from under the cover of the high land near us, and bore right down for us with the old flag at her peak. But alas, she might anchor! or steam away over to Gallipoli instead of keeping her course! The old hawser of our anchor had a tight strain on it and taxed the strength of the rascals, but still it was coming in at every turn; yet faster still came on the screw line-of-battle ship, and I held my breath in agony with my face turned over my shoulder, and leaning as far as I could over the side that my signal be seen.

The captain and the crew saw her not. They were busy at their work. But at last the captain caught my eager gaze; he looked too. By Jove, if he didn't jump and swear. There, within twenty yards or less of him was the figurehead of the *Hannibal*!—Bless the man who carved the ancient Carthaginian in his full Roman uniform, and bless the man who conceived the smallest bolt in her body!—the *Hannibal*, crowded with men, and no end of officers in gold-banded caps with telescopes and glasses all about, who were already looking their best at me as, quite regardless of everything like ropes or safety, I waved hat and white handkerchief like a maniac! “Ship ahoy!” I shouted; I know a little of the naval vernacular, you see. “For God's sake, help!” Some answer came back, I can't tell what, and the screw slowed a little, and it seemed as if the giant sidled over towards us. The captain of the brig bounded on the forecastle—“Stop your clamour, sir! my men will take you! I give them permission, but only on condition that you go at once. They are lowering the boat now. Quick! Come down; I do not want any of these gentry on board my ship.”

The boat was lowered, so to speak, at the off-side of the brig, and I know not how I got into it. The four scoundrels who manned it were mute, and as we

started out from under the counter, cast a wistful frightened look at the man-of-war which had crept up within easy hailing distance of the *Athene*—the name in gilt letters on the stern of the ruffian Greek. They pulled swiftly for the French schooner. In vain I pointed to the two decker. No longer attracted by my signals, and seeing the Greeks' boat down and making towards the Frenchman, those on board were satisfied all was right, and the *Hannibal* began to move on ahead. In a few minutes, however, I and all that remained of my poor effects were on board the little schooner *Belle Etoile*, of Marseilles, and I told the skipper my story. "Sacre matin!" he exclaimed. "Ah! les coquins! Heh! les scélérats! Voyez! ils se sauvent!" and so on. You should have heard him, as we saw the Greek cant round in the stream, fill his foresail and jib, and with all hands hauling away on peak halyards—all that's learnt on board the *Colchis*, Terence—fly down the stream like a bird. And there's the end of my story. The Frenchman—may the Lord guide him in his way over the waters—Etienne Polydore Mathieu Deschamps, as he wrote it for me with a very dirty honest paw, gave me a boat for shore. The Quartermaster-General assigned me these elegant quarters, for which I pay Mrs. Papa-

doulos egregious ransom. I have picked up a servant, an Italian of high degree, who is now buying me a pair of breeches, I hope, in the Bazaar. All I saved of the wreck you see around you. I have sent off my first letter to the *Hercules*, and wherever I am be sure I will look out for you, and do not forget your old friend now that we are in the field together."

"And this captain, you say, who spoke English so well, was he an Englishman?"

"Well, I think not—unless he was what O'Connell proposed once your countrymen should be called, and could pass muster as a West Briton."

"And what could he have been doing up here with a Greek brig?"

"That's more than I can say. His crew looked bad enough for anything—and odd as it may appear, I have an idea I saw his face before somewhere."

Virgilio, the Italian servant, appeared with a pair of Greek breeches, which suited the long boots admirably, and I set off on my way to discover the whereabouts of the P.M.O. MacPhillip. After much labour of signs and usage of dead-languages, as the stones did not prate of his whercabouts, I found him, in his improvised hospital, not in

the best of tempers, as he was fresh from one of his daily encounters with Sir George, who, being always in good health, regarded doctors as his natural enemies. My duties were assigned to me, and with half-a-dozen medicos I was quartered in the house of a Greek priest. We had quite enough to do. Ships were arriving every day, on their way to Scutari, and there were sick to be landed and taken care of from every one of them.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GALLIPOLI GHOST.

THERE was a force of British soon assembled at Gallipoli of near four thousand men, and there were French troops in greater number. In the excitement of this new life I was almost happy for a time—that is, I was taken abroad out of the cares and anxieties which came upon me when I had leisure to think. But on post days I had generally a relapse; my companions believed I was much afflicted by duns. My dear old Bates returned to his nest in the Pyrenees, but only to move off with Major Turnbull, “who was becoming very irritable at chess,” to Cannes. He corresponded with me regularly. From Sir Denis I had short letters now and then, and one day there came within his envelope some sheets of paper—crossed, I grieve to say—which I read over and over again that day. The letter was dated from London, and ran thus:—

“DEAR TERENCE,—My uncle says I am to write to you, as he thinks a few lines from me may be welcome to you, but as he has told you of the failure of all our endeavours to discover any clue to dear Mabel, I think he has exhausted the subject most interesting to us all. I am in much distress at his great dejection. He says he was in the light of a father to her. It is astonishing she has not written. There can be no doubt but that she could have managed to do so if she set her heart on it. Although she had a certain reserve, she was affectionate and warm-hearted, and it is dreadful to be in such ignorance respecting her. I hope next letter I may be able to tell you we have heard of or from her. My poor uncle is full of troubles of his own. He is much incensed against the people of Kilmoyle, and is disposed to abandon his intention of restoring the Castle. Gerald agrees with him, but I do not. At all events it will be on a much smaller scale. I suppose you have met Gerald, as he is Aide-de-Camp to General Crookencre, who commands a brigade which, the papers say, will be stationed at Gallipoli. I am sure you will take care of him, if needed, and I only hope, dear Terence, he will not want your help, and

that you will not require the services of any of your medical friends either, but the accounts of sickness in the papers rather alarm us about him and you. My uncle is certain the Russians will not be so easily frightened as most people imagine. How I wish I could frighten them! We are very quiet and rather lonely here. Sir Denis is very much occupied with business, and we refuse invitations, much to my content, for I am little inclined for society. What you and I have gone through since we were little people plucking daisies and buttercups in the meadows of Lough-na-Carra! Have we not had our trials and sorrows? We are going to pass the summer abroad, as soon as Sir Denis has arranged affairs; and I have only stipulated to be near a good post town, so we may get our letters regularly. Rose Prendergast wrote to me soon after you left, in very bad spirits. Instead of going to the United States, she has returned to the *Sacré Cœur* at Angers, and speaks of taking the veil. Her brother is somewhere in Europe. He it was who advised her to take refuge in the convent. How anxious we shall be if this war really goes on! You know where to seek for protection and comfort, and every night and morning my

prayers are offered up for you and those who are so dear to us. Do not forget to tell me if your head is all right now.

“Ever your affectionate friend,

“M. BUTLER.”

“P.S.—Of course a postscript. Sir Denis has told me a good deal I never knew before about people in India, and your relationship to us. I do not quite comprehend it all, but feel a greater sympathy for you than ever. Mrs. Considine is trying to get an under-tenant for Lough-na-Carra. Her son will only attend to horse racing. The London lawyer who bought the Prendergasts’ little property, has purchased it for a foreign lady,—and it appears it might have been taken from Rose altogether, only for a deed made by her father, which left the place to trustees for her instead of Maurice. There are most curious stories going among the country people. They accuse the native servants of knowing of the attack, and of being in league with strangers, who were seen about the neighbourhood, and, as the establishment had to be greatly reduced, my uncle has sent all his old coloured servants back to India.

“M. B.”

It is very well that soldiers have some to pray

for them at home. There are pious and devout men, who in the hurry of campaigning, before and after battle, forget not their Maker. But who can think of Him in the shock of arms, when the air is laden with death, and the ground covered with shrieking wretches passing away to their account or engaged in killing? I can remember little sign of our being different from the Turk when first we landed in the East, except that his muezzin called him to prayers twice a day, and that he generally went. No one called us to prayers, nor did we go. But when cholera stalked through our camp, when the winter came and brought men face to face with a more dread enemy than the Russian, then the poor chaplains, whose general characteristics were intense seediness, and who would have been glad of a change of sackcloth, and who had no ashes as there were no fires, were more regarded.

There never was such a time of great exaltation and depression mingled together for most of us as that gathering of the armies at Gallipoli.

Bang! bang! bang! And so on—gun after gun—the old houses shaking—the glasses tumbling out of the lattice windows—the plaster falling off the walls—tiles sliding down into the streets—Greeks surreptitiously scowling—Turks bismillahing—all

the dogs barking, and the buzzards whistling with fright.

“Who’s that now, I wonder? Confound their saluting, they’ll bring the house down.” Now it was a General—then it was an Admiral—now the Duke of Cambridge, landing quietly and strolling about in a shooting jacket—then the Prince Napoleon, all cocked hat and feathers, heralded by a salute of a hundred guns from the whole French fleet, and a roar which produced such an effect on Standish’s Italian that he then and there departed, and was no more seen of his master. It was a struggle for life at all times, as provisions were scarce, and the Commissariat could not always be depended on. Officers of rank might be seen flocking round the doors of the bakers’ and butchers’ shops, contending for loaves and sheeps’ heads and livers; and I once met my respected colonel with a sheep’s liver on a stick, going to his quarters down the main street in great state, as if he liked it.

But one day appeared on the walls of a very dilapidated cabin in the Greek quarter, chalked in bold characters of no great uniformity, the legend “Grand Restaurant de l’Armée Alliée de l’Orient.” Naturalists wonder how vultures scent a carcass from afar. Let any one who doubts whether man

has similar instincts, observe how in a camp or strange city the creature will discover his food. In a few hours there was a gathering of ponies round the door of the Grand Restaurant, and a babel of tongues inside; and the spirited proprietor, who had laid in several cabbages, a sack of potatoes, three sheeps' heads, some flour, and a skin of Tenedos wine, was speedily obliged to inform his clamorous customers that all he could offer them was pipes, coffee, and tobacco. He was let off with his life on condition that he was ready for all comers next day! It was such a blessing! Few of us had anything to cook even had we had servants who could cook anything. The canteens had the property of losing every useful article if any were ever inside them, and one envied the ancient Greeks who had their meat "roasted skilfully," when he beheld the ration placed before him by Private Dobbs, as the result of his exertions and fuel. In the Grand Restaurant we had sheep's-head soup, not immoderately over stocked with hair and eyes—and meats prepared with onions and garlic, and fowl not quite destitute of feathers, and pilaff and unsavoury omelets. We had bread and wine, and Turkish tobacco and coffee. So that the Grand Restaurant, especially when a second tin

sconce containing two candles was added to the illuminating resources of the establishment, and the wall was whitewashed and decorated with several woodcuts, kindly furnished by the officers of both armies, presented a spectacle of considerable animation and brilliancy. We were sitting one night over one of the usual "Confounded shame" subjects, at the plank supported on trestles which served as a table (but wasn't it covered with a piece of yellow calico tacked to the sides?)—there were a horny captain of our old friends, the 4th of the Line, explaining the injustice to which he had been subjected—(they have plenty of "Confounded shames" in the army of France)—"by the system of selection," to a young lieutenant of the Slashers, who was favouring him with a counter statement as to the defects of purchase in securing a fellow's rise in the service—a major of artillery, who had been left to fossilize so long in the East few could see the life there was left under the crust till he broke it, and some half-dozen officers, English and French, each intent on hunting down a grievance, whilst Major Hood, between whiffs of his pipe, gave me shreds of knowledge about the natives ;—when we heard a commotion in the town,

confused noises and shouts, and then a distant roll of drums.

“C’est l’ennémi!” cried Captain Petit.

“Can it be the Russians?” asked Mr. Smyjith.

“Bosh!” puffed out the Major. “Where would the Russians come from? It’s as bad, though—it’s a fire. And I can tell you a fire means something in a place like this.”

Sure enough the major was right! There was a glare in the sky, and the sparks showed the cause was not far off. A priest had been lighting up his pictures in honour of Easter; his legs or his hands or both were unsteady. As we flew towards the spot, the major asked whose house it was; “Papa Sergius’,” panted a Greek in high glee, as a great fire generally is conducive to many little robberies.

“Why, deuce take it!” exclaimed the major; “that’s my quarters!”

“And, bedad,” added I, “it’s a case of ‘*jam proximus ardet Hugh Callaghan*’—that’s the name of my chum, and we live next door to you.”

As I rushed upstairs to save my little all, I was followed by a band of French soldiers, shouting out, “*Cassez tout! cassez tout!*” and it was with difficulty I induced them to abandon that novel method

of putting out a fire. The major next door had a similar struggle with our energetic allies ; and when the houses had been completely gutted, and mother Papadoulos, and Papa Dimitri, and Papa Sergius, and several other respectabilities had been quite burned out, there came with imposing tramp, and in no indecent haste, up the street, a strong body of British troops headed by Colonel Wigpole, and followed by three water-buckets to extinguish the conflagration. Fortunately there was at the rear of Papa Sergius's a large garden, in which that inebriated ecclesiastic and his family took refuge as soon as the fire declared itself. As it was surrounded by a high wall, and the burning ruins in front formed a barrier in that direction, we shied all our property out of the windows into the garden ; and the onions were smitten down by saddles, revolver-cases, medicine-chests, odd boots, and swords, uniform-cases, and portmanteaux ; the apple-trees were laden with blankets, coats, and garments. The major and I held council together. "Where do you intend to sleep to-night, major?" inquired I. "We must sleep somewhere, and it will be difficult to obtain quarters at this hour."

"Here," replied the major, decisively. "Pick up a blanket or two ; it's a coldish night. We can

put our feet towards the fire there—no fear of it's going out. As the houses are down, nothing can fall on us. They have put sentries on in the street outside, and our fellows there will cover our rear, so that we can sleep till morning very snugly."

And the placid warrior gathered him up the makings of a bed, trod down a patch of onions, lighted his unfailing pipe, and was soon in an un-mistakeable slumber. With less skill I followed his example, and I was awoke by the sun striking through my closed eyelids to see the major's head buried in a horse-bucket, as a preliminary to an *al fresco* bath which he had prepared for himself by the aid of my macintosh and of Mr. Malony, who had spent the night among the "Harmoniums," as he thought proper to style the Armenians, in charge of our horses in the corner of the garden.

"That's what comes of letting thim priests marry," said Mr. Malony. "It's hard enough on the layayity to be let do it, but when it comes to a priest, see what happens. They take to dhrink! The ould Papa and Mama there sucked in a big shkin of wine if they had a dhrop last night, and the Mama was the worst of the two! Father Mat likes his dandy o' punch as well as any one, but he'll

never set fire to Kilmoyle, I'll be bound, by raisin of takin' too much."

It was the night after that in which the houses of Dimitri and Papa Sergius and Mrs. Papadoulos, and Lord knows how many more decent people, who were not much the worse for the incrimination, fell into the flames and crushed them out, that I, Terence Brady, and Major Hood pitched our tent in the garden of Papa Sergius. I say our tent, because the colonel had in his full knowledge of the Turkish language gone off with me to a respectable old Osmanli in very short jacket, very loose breeches, very dirty fez, and very long pipe, and availing himself of my full-blown splendour as surgeon of the Bengal Tigers, with subterfuge of tongue and many fictions unknown to me, induced that very obliging functionary who was in charge of the tents to send up one to the garden of Papa Sergius. Now the garden of the priest was, as I have said, solely intended for domestic purposes. There were trees laden with incipient figs and apples, and the walls of loose stone afforded support to vines and apricots; but the main feature of the Papa's horticultural scheme was certainly onions. A vast bed of that odorous legume spread under the trees, enclosing

here and there an island of potatoes or a patch of tomatoes and poppies, and in this sea our tent—a two-poled ridge—was pitched. All our properties were conveyed inside, and the onions were trodden under foot within the walls. Jupp, bombardier, and Angelo, ex-brigadier of the Papal Dragoons, prepared our evening meal. It was of liver, carefully roasted in the Homeric fashion on sticks over the fire, which was blown into life close to the heels of our horses. Nor was it unsavoured of onion. And our drink was of the well in the garden, tintured “as it were” by our united rations of rum. And our dessert was of two long pipes bought of a Turk in the bazaar, and of mountain tobacco. And our talk was of war, and of Turks, and of Don Quixote, which the major read ever and always in the Spanish, translating it now and then for me into racy English. Once more we beat down the upstart onions, which would assert their independence as the cool night-air toned their blood. We lay down on our blankets, one at each side of the tent.

“Good-night, doctor!” “Good-night, major!” The lights were out—that is, each blew out the candle, stuck in a bottle by his bed-side.

Just as I was going off to sleep I was startled

by the major's calling out rather angrily, "Stop that, if you please! I hate practical jokes, my young friend."

"Stop what, major? I did nothing."

"Why, you threw something at me and hit me on the ribs, that's all!"

"On my honour I did nothing of the kind!"

"You didn't?"

"No! certainly not! I was nearly fast asleep."

"Then don't do it again. Good night."

I was slipping into a dose again when—whirr—something struck me a smart crack on the ear.

"Thank you, Major Hood! you've had your revenge, I suppose. Now we can go to sleep."

"What is it, doctor?" grunted the major from under a blanket—"what do you say?"

"Why, that I caught it on the ear that time—a capital shot, whatever it was, too."

"I assure you, Mr. Brady, you are quite mistaken. I never touched you!"

"Well! it's most extraordinary! There must be some one playing tricks on us."

The major grumbled out something, and I was passing off into slumber once more when I heard a noise like that of a hand scraping along the canvas of the tent outside. It came nearer and

nearer, and it was so distinct I called out, "Who is there?" There was no answer. "Major Hood," I shouted, "there's some one outside the tent! We both sat up and listened. "They are thieves, probably," he whispered. "They want to start us out of the tent, and lay hands on whatever they can get. Have your pistol handy; mind you don't shoot yourself or me; and let us slip on our boots and await events." I heard the grating of his sword as he drew it from the sheath. We sat up with cocked ears. "It is very odd," remarked the major, "there's Malony, Jupp, Angelo, and the Armenians at the end of the garden; the gate is fast, for I bolted it when we came in. No one can get over the walls without tumbling them down. They can't get over the hot bricks in front. I think——"

And as he spoke the tent shook violently, as though a man had fallen over one of the ropes. "Turn to the right!" shouted the major, as he bolted out at one end of the tent. I, pistol in hand, dashed out at the opposite entrance, careered towards the left, and fell over a tent-peg just as the major in his shirt came round, ten miles an hour, with his Andrea Ferrara whistling through the air.

"There are some rascals about, and we must spoil

their sport. Stay in the tent, lie down, and don't stir for your life unless I call. If I am coming near the tent I will cough twice." I obeyed orders. In a few minutes the major came in, heralded by two coughs. "The horses and the men are all right," he reported; "the gate is fast; the walls are untouched. I have looked up into all the trees. The sentry in the street outside the ruins is certain no one has passed, or indeed stirred in the place for the last hour. We must have startled the vagabonds by this time, and now let us try to sleep." And so we lay down again. Once more I was dozing off when I felt something brush past my chin gently, and with a flip, touch me on the nose. I caught at it and held it in an iron grasp. It was a poppy, which had been trampled on and had asserted its right to insurrection. "I've caught the fellow this time."

"Heh?—where?—what?"

"It's a poppy-head. It tickled my nose." The major ejaculated, and soon afterwards snored. I slept too; I was wandering somewhere about the ruins of Kilmoyle, when the tent vibrated as if it would come down on top of us, and as we both awoke it was shivering away into rest.

The major was very savage and so was I.

“Can you see a star through the calico as you turn with your face to the wall of the tent,” he inquired—“just about the height of a man?”

I looked; “Yes, I do.”

“Then keep your eye on it! Cock your pistol. If any one passes, challenge, ‘Who goes there?’ and fire. I’ll do the same. If any one is hurt, it’s his own fault.”

In a minute or two my star was eclipsed, and the tent was lighted up with the flash of two pistols, for the major fired at his side. Bang! went the sentry’s firelock outside. Up jumped the soldier-servants and the Armenians shouting “murder!” in different languages. The horses tried to break away. We ran out to pick up our dead men, and a horrible mocking “hah! hah! hah!” sounded up above us in the air. There was a pretty row in the streets begun at once by all the dogs of Gallipoli, and sustained by the “Guard, turn-out!” of the post at hand and the tramp of the patrol. “What did *you* fire at, sentry?”

“E thenk,” quoth Sandy, “et must hav’ bin a sperrit. Et whasked bee me, lick a bag wheet doggie wi’ wings, reet over the het stanes!”

Next night the major and I slept in a tent with two holes in it, which was pitched in a piece

of waste ground behind the garden. To this day we do not know what it was, nor do we accept the explanation of Sir George, when he heard the story.

“A nice piece of work you have made, Major Hood, you and the doctor there, about one of those large white owls.”

This was the second time a white owl was called in to explain an occurrence for which it scarcely seemed accountable.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ENEMY COMES UPON US.

THE Bengal Tigers are again on their way to take place at the seat of war.

We encamped at Devna, by a pleasant stream which comes trilling over the dam of an old mill into a deep pool, where there were hundreds of eager bathers every morning. The tents were pitched on the slope of a gentle hill above the watercourse ; and at some distance in the midst of a well-wooded valley, which put us in mind of the grounds of an English park, spread out a widening lake. Here were posted all the regiments of the Light Division, which had moved up from Gallipoli to Varna, and from Varna, after a halt of some days at Aladyn, to this charming ridge. There were rumours that we were going to Silistria to help the leaguered Turks, and there was a good deal of contentment at the thought of escaping drill, and all the work

which was supposed to have been done in the barrack-yard.

Our Light Cavalry are scouring the country towards the Danube in search of any adventurous Cossacks who may get out of bounds. They are scouring something else too. But it is a comfort they are moving. The men are in good health, and the regiments, coy as girls in their first ball-room, are at last beginning to make each other's acquaintance, and little festivities occur between them—simple, yet satisfactory. A bower is constructed by the men, of leaves and branches from the neighbouring woods. The ottomans are heaps of meadow grass and rushes, and commissariat barrels. Rough Tenedos wine makes excellent cup, which is mixed in horse buckets and flavoured with the borage growing wild around us. The bower is hung with coloured-paper lanterns, and a great cloud of tobacco keeps off the pernicious insects. *Exoritur clamor virorum*—the song and mighty chorus—for in those days the Light Division was in merry mood, and made some little fun out of its respected chief and his peculiarities.

“Give us the song of the Light Division, Peter.”

“Hear! hear!” cries everybody.

And Peter sings, to the air of "Poor Mary Anne"—

"No one knows me now—oh, crikey! I'm so worn down
Since I joined the Light Division under General Brown.
Hard drill, no beer, and tough provision! that's the fare
of the Light Division,

Chorus—Oh! hard's the fate of the Light Division
under General Brown.

"What's the use of their voting money, oh! General
Brown!

For chocolate and pots of honey? oh! General Brown!
When, instead of giving us our porter, you drills us till
we're dry as mortar,

Then d——s us 'cos our hair ain't shorter, oh! General
Brown!"

&c. &c.

There was no ill-nature in the verses if there was no poetry, and the foibles of the veteran afforded subjects to the Poet Laureate of the Division in many canticles lost to the world, for poor Peter rests, mute and voiceless, under a sod by the Woronzow road, and with him his songs.

But again he sings, to the air of "Bonny Dundee"—

"Come pipeclay your jackets and buckle your stocks!
Awa' wi' mustaches and dirt-breeding locks!
Such d——d innovations I'll surely put down,
It's nae up with the shakos," cries General Brown.

"Let your medical comforts be kept in their chest!
Comforts no true Peninsular hero possessed;
When shot through the leg, o'er a mule I was thrown.
Ere your d——d ambulances, thank Heaven, were
known!

"So pipeclay," &c.

After one of these nights at the Symposium, I went off early to read the letters which had been handed to me. I hoped for an answer to a sad epistle, in which I ventured to——I scarce know, but when the post was gone, I thought over the words and feared they would offend her. There was, however, only a short letter from Mr. Bates, and a note from Major Turnbull, to say he feared my old friend was breaking up, “as his temper was so bad,” and a few lines from dear old Jack Window. He had arrived in command of the *Slowcoach*—a step more for him, as the famous old craft was a heavy—a very heavy frigate—in the Black Sea, and hoped soon to see me on board, or to beat up my quarters in camp.—Oh, yes! There was a slip of paper from Standish, who was at Varna, to keep near his base of supplies and operations as he said, asking me to come in and see him.

“A noble-minded member of the House of Commons,” he wrote, “has in his place in Parliament called attention to my food, and has done his best to starve me out. But though the minister magnanimously promised I should be put on short commons, I can get a morsel for you to eat, if you come.”

I made out the purport of these missives with

much difficulty, for there came in through the folds of the tent myriads of winged beetles, very small and shiny, which put out the candle again and again, and turned the white canvas black with their multitudes. At last, fairly beaten by them I lay down on my stretcher, pulled a sheet over my face, and went to sleep.

The voice of my hospital orderly woke me up.

“What is it? Can’t you call Mr. Squills?”

“He’s there already, sir. It’s very sudden.—The men are crying out all over the camp.” As he spoke, the orderly’s voice quavered a little. “Some of them taken very bad.”

“And what is it, do you think—bad water?”

“I wouldn’t like to say, sir,” replied the man, timidly.

I hurried to the hospital tent. Yes—I was face to face with the enemy I had most to dread! The Cholera was upon us!

There was no escape from such an enemy but in flight. In something like terror the camp broke up, and the Division moved to Monastir. But the hill side was dotted with black mounds.

“I warned the General how it would be,” said MacPhillip. “Any one could see it. This is the regular route of the cholera between the Danube

and the Black Sea ; and he always halts at Devna. Look at that great lake at one side of us, and the valley, in which a white mist rises till it overtops this hill and makes the tents reek every night, and the woods all round barring the air, and filled with decaying leaves and rotting mould."

Disasters came thick. The news arrived that the cholera had broken out at Varna, and then that it had appeared in the fleet. A tremendous fire destroyed our storehouses and magazines in the city. No one could tell the cause ; but it was remembered afterwards that a brig sailed out of the harbour in the midst of the fire, and was scarcely noticed in the confusion. The English officers said she was a Greek, and had French papers as a chartered transport. The French denied all knowledge of her.

From Standish I had an account of the fire, in which he said—

"As I was running towards the magazines with your friend Major Hood, who is here attached to the head-quarters' staff, whom should I meet in a narrow lane, if I am not mistaken, but the rascally captain of the Greek brig. He was coming with some of his vagabond crew at a smart walk in an opposite direction. I think he recognised me, and

at any other moment I should have had something to say to him ; but we passed in a hurry, and it is only on thinking over one thing and another, and hearing of the suspicions attached to a Greek brig which actually left the harbour during the fire, I begin to think I should have had him arrested."

Then, after some details of the fire, he said—

" Captain Desmond, in whom you are interested, has had a narrow squeak ; he goes to Constantinople to-morrow on short sick leave to recruit his health."

Gerald was a bad correspondent, and only wrote a brief note, in reply to several letters, so I had quite given him up ; and this was the first news I had heard of him, except in orders whenever General Crookencre's Brigade was moving.

But at last the wished-for time arrived ; and after the loss of invaluable weeks, the Allied Armies leaving behind them under the turf of Bulgaria and in the Dobrudscha, as many men as fell at Alma and Inkerman together, embarked for the Crimea.

" Where is it," inquired Serjeant Murphy, " they say we're going to, Serjeant Wallop ?"

" The Crimea," replied Serjeant Wallop, condescendingly. " It's the same place, Serjeant Murphy, as Krim Tartary, that we've heerd tell on."

“Krim Tartary! That’s a quare name. I suppose, now, Serjeant Wallop, that’s where the cream of tartar comes from?” inferred Serjeant Murphy, dubiously. “It must be a wholesome place, any ways, that’s one good thing.”

The saloon of the *City of London*, John Cargill, master, was a blaze of lights, and down at both sides of two long rows of tables sat officers in red and blue coats—staff and linesmen, commissariat and medical. The sea captain was at the head of his table, his eyes glistening in his honest, rugged face, under the pent of his shaggy eyebrows, like lights on a coast at night. On his right was the general of the division to which I was attached for the time, for I had been appointed to the staff *ad interim*. Sir De Lacy, erect and soldierly, with a smile on his face, was listening to the ideas of his adjutant-general, illustrated by lines of port wine drawn on the table, and redoubts of filberts and raisins and almonds, and at each movement of the enemy or the Allies, Captain Jock Cargill rubbed his hands gently, and said, “That’s richt gude!—that’s gude, indeed, colonel! I’m with you there.”

MacPhillip and the first officer were engaged in a discussion on the comparative merits of the systems of Reid and Dugald Stewart, with occasional skir-

mishes anent the superiority of Glasgow or Edinburgh, as schools of "metafeesicks." Standish, in great good humour and spirits, was sketching for the amusement of the young fellows around him, an imaginary scene for the *Illustrated London News*,—"Landing of the Special Correspondent of the *Hercules*, and Death of the Editor of the *Invalide Russe*." I was suffering under Marmaduke Blossom, M.D., Inspector-General of Hospitals, who was displeased because I neglected entomology generally, and had not bottled and sent him some of the beetles which had put out my candle the night the cholera appeared. But he was burning with the love of science, and would not hurt a fly except to preserve him, nor a young doctor save to instruct him. He liked lively specimens, however, and the more they fluttered as they were pinned, the more content was Marmaduke Blossom.

We were still all bound to an invisible point (as we had been for several days), to many miles west of Cape Tarkan—a point on the sea—and our destination was more definite than our plans. Up on deck there was a sight such as no living man, or haply his remotest ancestors, had ever beheld. Had the stars of heaven come down and settled on the waters, there could not have been more glitter and

sparkling on the dark sea; for the combined navies of England and France, with the fleet of the Turk, were escorting their floating armies in hundreds of ships, in Cimmerian darkness, to the land where it had its abode; and at every mast-head hung a lantern, so that as the flotilla glided over the heaving waves the lights variegated the veil of night as the sparks which travel to and fro in expiring tinder. There was not a man on board—not one in all the armada—who had not his cares and troubles, but no philosophy could cause my own to be merged in the multitude of others' griefs. I thought of that, as MacPhillip, having gravitated to Blossom, engaged in a discussion on medical matters likely to come into notice as soon as we were within gunshot of the Muscovite.

“I admit that, as you say, it is not safe to diminish the vital energies in capital operations,” proceeded MacPhillip; “but pain is a great enemy to life. If chloroform renders the patient insensible to pain, you will admit it ought to be administered, unless positive disadvantages can be adduced against its use, either at the time or subsequently.”

“Certainly not!” rejoined Blossom. “I’m not prepared to admit your proposition. Pain *may be a*

very good thing. It's a signal given by nature when in danger and aware of it. I think it's a good sign when patients cry out under the knife. I've observed the very quiet cases are generally accompanied by manifestations of low animal energy."

"Great cry and little wool, doctor, is it?" simpered Tony Potts, now an A.D.C. and captain. "If I get a chance I'll sing out, I tell you."

Marmaduke Blossom and MacPhillip were not inclined, however, to expose the arcana to Tony Potts, and diverged into a general digression on the ignorance of the non-professional world—a curious illustration of which MacPhillip adduced in the common remark that pain was cumulative. "You hear it said of a battle-field, where the wounded are lying all about, that there must be a frightful amount of pain. It's absurd; you can't multiply the pain of one man by that of another, and add up the sum total."

"Certainly not," acquiesced Blossom. "It's a fallacy."

"But there must be a deuced lot of fellows in pain, you'll admit," interposed Potts, "and you can add 'em up, you know: eh?"

"I presume you will not contend, Captain Potts,

that if one of your men has got a toothache and you have another toothache, that he or you suffer more or less on that account?"

"But I maintain that there will be two of us with the toothache, and that there's twice as much toothache going as if only one had it; and as I see you are both going to argue against me, I'll run up on deck and smoke a cigar."

"It's very melancholy, MacPhillip," said the Doctor, "very."

"It is indeed, Blossom. Let us have a game of chess."

And not many days after I beheld both the worthy gentlemen with their shirt-sleeves turned up, and with a crowd of assistants sawing and cutting, and probing—without much care for their theories.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LANDING.

WHEN we got on deck one morning the low land, close to us, lay like the coast of Essex at ebb tide. Sir De Lacy and his staff on the quarter-deck were gathered round the signal officer, who was reading off the language of the flags. The force was to land on that flat beach there, beyond which we see a narrow lake. At the other side of the lake extended broad desolate-looking plains towards the horizon, where the Tchatir Dag and its chain rose up like islands in the sea. How all scanned the shore which so many were never to leave! There was all the charm of adventure in strange lands about the expedition. Our chief did not know much more of the Crimea than Jason did of Colchis when he filled the sails of the Argo. Not a creature was visible; but we heard that, not many miles away, the high bank of a river, flowing into the sea between us and Sebastopol, was occupied

by an army. The fleet at last moved in slowly towards the beach, and dropping way, drew up in a belt of black hulls and masts outside the gentle surf. The air was darkened by the smoking funnels, which furnished a pall-like cloak for the landing; and on a signal given, there pushed out from the sides of the ships long lines of boats laden with specks, red and blue, about to gather and condense into iron battalions, to take seisin of the lands of the Czar.

“How are we to get our wounded away?” asked MacPhillip of a staff-officer. “If there’s fighting, there will be wounded, I suppose; and Dr. Blossom’s ambulances have all been landed again at Varna.”

“My dear sir! that is a question for the doctors,” replied Captain Nephew; “I have nothing to do with it.”

“You may, though, when yev’ a bullet through your weam,” retorted MacPhillip, savagely: “you may think it a staff question then. But mercy o’ me! what’s that?—saw you ever the like of you?” he exclaimed, pointing with his finger to the strand.

The first boat from the British had landed its freight, and General Sir George Brown was taking military measures to occupy the soil. A party of the Seventh Fusiliers were on the beach, and the

General proceeded to walk up the sand-bank in perfect ignorance of what was patent to the whole fleet, that a group of Cossacks had caught sight of him, and, with lances lowered and heads crouched down to their pommels, were cantering gingerly towards the General.

"I bet ten to one they bone him, Pickles!" broke out Naggett, of the Slashers (and of the Racehorses). "Did you ever see such a thing? I declare I can almost see a grin on the face of the chap with the fur cap who's coming up now."

"Done! I take you," Pickles shouted. "Fivers or sovs., Naggett? In fivers! Done with you!"

"No bet, Pickles! Spoke too late. You waited till the old boy pulled up, and those Fusiliers were moving on. What a horrid chouse. It would have been such a lark if they had carried off the old fellow under the eyes of the whole fleet. There they go! The Fusiliers are firing at 'em. Don't they step along just! Balls! Fall in, there! Mr. Pickles! Company's falling in. Look out for boat number three."

It was all very easy to land, but what to do by the "sad sea wave," ankle deep in shingles, without particular food and no shelter, was the thing. And at night, when it came on to rain—rain that beat

up the loose stones on the beach, and made the sea whistle, and I found myself, in distinguished company, under an uptilted cart, which seemed an excellent conductor for the water—I could not even sympathize with poor Standish, who lay in a cold bath in the sand, close beside me, and was in great distress because “his note-book was all in pulp in his pocket, and his letter to the *Hercules* all a mash.”

“And what I fully expect—it’s the most certain thing in the world,” prophesied Bagshaw, from under Lady Hayrake’s umbrella, which she had relinquished to that excellent warrior when she bade her husband good-bye and returned from the beach to the ship, “the Russians will come down presently with all their field artillery, take up a position on the other side of the salt lake there, and sweep us off the beach. The same thing as happened nearly in the Catterwally Pass, only I was too knowing for them. And the ships daren’t fire. I wouldn’t,” concluded Bagshaw, solemnly, “give that,” and he snapped his fingers, and sent a bucketful of water down his old neck, “for the whole of this force. Wouldn’t be surprised if those French got us into it.”

“Joy cometh in the morning.” It was merely

a negative of pain, however. The multitude around me was all alive. I landed with three days' provisions cooked, in a havresack, and with a case of instruments and a flask of brandy, the uniform on my back, and my sword, which I overlaid in the night, so that I awoke with a fine impression of the royal arms on my right cheek. The salt water and rain soaked the havresack, and my biscuit and meat became blended into a very uninviting-looking unbaked pudding. The air was very "raw," and though it was not my custom of a forenoon, I sought my flask, unscrewed the top, and poured out a little brandy into the metal cup—that is, I would have done it if I could. But no fluid came—no gurgle sounded in the dark cave of emptiness; a miscreant hand had robbed me as I slept. Every man there however was loaded with his little misery and his little care; and all and each obliged to forget everything but duty! There comes presently down along the narrow belt between the salt lake and the sea, perfectly mounted and perfectly sitting his charger, an old man of singularly gracious presence. He looks as neat as a new pin. His general's plumes wave softly and silkily in the early breeze; his uniform would pass muster at a levée; every button bright and his boots shining like his spurs. His

face has the stamp of what may better be called "courtliness" than anything else, upon it. It is not a rugged mountain of features like Cromwell's or Turenne's, nor massive like Waldstein's, nor cut with the haughty beauty of Marlborough's, nor is it cast in the mould at once inflexible and expressive of Wellington's; it is a face destitute of the fire and keenness of St. Arnaud's; its pervading characteristic is serenity—a calm almost sphinx-like—and benevolent "gentlemanliness." One may see such faces above old-fashioned ties and bandanas looking out of club windows in St. James's Street, or at cover side in the country; or you may recognise the type in family picture galleries; and many De Lignes, Schwartzenegrs, Gallases, and the like, have delighted mankind and society and armies by similar gifts of countenance and bearing. The empty coat-sleeve looped to his breast, far more than his staff, announced to his army that Lord Raglan was present; for there were regiments then which were not acquainted with his appearance. But all knew their chief had lost his arm fighting against the French, whose troops, serving the nephew of the man whom Lord Raglan must have regarded only as "the Corsican" of his youth, were now to form line-of-battle with the red-

coats. He passed on through the mass of men swarming on the beach with a bland smile on his features, very much as if he were going for a morning ride in Rotten Row.

Day after day we halted—the beach was horrible at last! Provisions were landed from the fleet, and from the teeming ships came boats for ever. The nights were fine, and we could sleep in our cloaks, with a comfortable pillow of shingle under our heads. All the while I was running to and fro among the sick. The enemy had come with us across the sea.

“The General’s man’s very bad, sir; can you come at once?”

By the margin of the salt lake the poor fellow lies in his blanket, and kneeling by his side there is a young man in soiled black clothes, who holds his hands, and with uncovered head prays softly; the dying man feebly repeats the words, and looks upwards into the clear blue sky; but his thoughts have gone before him, and the glaze on his eye betokens the near approach of the Comforter. The chaplain bends down, whispers into the ear of the dying man, and crosses his cold hands on his breast. As he raised himself from his knees, I uttered an ejaculation—

“Dick Bolton! you here?”

“Neither of us could be of use now, my dear Brady!”

A few hurried questions—a minute or two given to inquiries after mutual friends—to old times, was all we could spare to each other, for we were both needed elsewhere.

“When I see you again I will tell you about Maurice Prendergast. Where do you think I saw him, if ever I saw one man like another? Landing at Pera from a caique! Don’t forget. Second Brigade, Third Division. God protect you till we meet!”

And that never was to be. Worn out by fatigue as he toiled on foot after the army, Bolton was attacked by an enemy he had learned not to fear. He sleeps under a mound which the affectionate regards of his flock raised over him in a vine-clad valley in a distant land.

CHAPTER IX.

WE COME UPON THE ENEMY.

THERE must be a great change wrought in man's nature before he ceases to revel in war—not always in the heat of battle, which may find dross where the metal seemed purest—but in the enterprise and adventure of campaigning. It is a new sensation to find you are in danger from men you have never seen—who owe you no ill-will—whom you are bound to kill if you can—and to know that you will be honoured by all your fellows for doing the work. Most men must have the backs of their heads removed and some other matter put in place of the present grouting ere they cease to delight in such homicide; and we may despair, I fear, of ever welcoming the advent of the day when a nation shall be brought to the bar of public opinion and condemned for murder because it has waged war—above all, successful war.

I stood on a sand-hill, and saw the army move.

from the beach towards the enemy. It was a sight which filled one's throat and made the heart swell—mine, although I had been working among the sick, and had sent off my last boatful of hopeless sufferers to the ships. The freshness of the morning air—the life and animation of the march—the swarming transports, and their fluttering signals and flapping canvas—the stately procession of the line-of-battle ships and frigates as they moved on with their advance-guard of swift steamers—the perfect order in which each scarlet oblong took up its place, as brigade after brigade formed, and the divisions extended and spread out over the rolling downs, fragrant with flowers and deep with pasture—the galloping aides, riding from one bright patch of horsemen to the other—the dark masses of the artillery—the black fringe of the Rifles rolling before the wave as it swept over the plain—on our left the cavalry moving in the light of their own helmets, sabres, and lance-points—the dun-coloured crowd of camp-followers, and the scanty arabas—all formed a picture—ah, no!—formed a real body and soul of war, which was beautiful and terrible enough to justify the love and pride of kings! Did I think of my vocation then? Not one bit! I longed to ride with that whirling cavalry, or to march at

the head of an obedient column. Why am I obliged to attend to the miserable driver whose leg has just been crushed by the wheel of a gun, and who will never mount horse again or join his comrades of the R.H.A.? It is a descent from Pegasus, and it does me good to touch the hard ground of matter-of-fact duty again. And when at last my turn came to move off with my dear old Tigers, all my enthusiasm was nigh smothered in the heat of the sweltering ranks; for after many days of sea-carriage, the noblest heroes, packed close in ships, and destitute of water, will in tight cloth clothes swelter, to say the least of it, under a Crimean September sun. I had acquired the right to purchase a horse. The cavalry swept in some wretched creatures one morning, and a Tartar, whose mind was much perturbed by fear respecting the genuineness of British sovereigns—he tested them, in British fashion, with his teeth—sold me a soliped which certainly had died of age and muscular imbecility but for hard spurring and the excitement around him. The Brighton downs—(not quite so sharply accentuated) with a bluer sea and flowers springing in the grass in greater profusion than at home—this is what we are marching over in that ordered array from which the blaze of the

sun is flashed back at every step in rays innumerable. But before us, and away towards the broad bands of rising ground purpled in the distance, and gradually heaping tier over tier till they are lost in the blue peak of the Tchatir Dag, there ascend, reddening at the base, pillars of smoke in the still air—now black—now whitening as they die out. The Cossack has been busy with the torch, and he is preparing our welcome of fire and ashes!

Hour after hour we move on. It is a slow march, for the men must halt now and then to rest; and it is needful to keep the order of our advance. During one of these breaks, when an army is resolved into myriads of units, when arms are piled, packs shifted, pipes lighted, and a hum which is the laughter and shouting of thousands all together swells over the plain, I rode on with Major Hood towards our cavalry, which was covering our front very prettily with its Light Brigade. We came to a narrow sluggish ditch-like stream groping through a fat meadow on its way to the sea. By the side of the road close to the bridge were the remains of a whitewashed farm house—blackened by the smoke of the hayricks and outhouses, and charred by the heat so that the planks of the roof had crumpled up and broken away from the eaves. The major was a

man of forethought. "The cavalry can't have had time to rummage this place. Let us go in and see if the Cossacks have left anything."

We dismounted, hitched up our horses at the door of the Post Station of Buljanak, and entered the house. Room after room—it was all the same—furniture broken—drawers open and empty—scattered articles of clothing—every mark of hasty flight. As we opened one door, a cat charged furiously between our legs and was followed by a kid, but in an instant a shot from Hood's revolver rolled the latter over. "There's our dinner for a couple of days, my lad! I'm not sure we ought to have let pussy go, for cat's meat may be a delicacy if the Cossacks have their way. Now I'll just make our kid portable, and do you go on and try your luck. Don't spare anything eatable." I descended into the court just as Standish bounded round the corner in pursuit of a wounded guineafowl, with a smoking pistol in his hand, and ran it to death in the embers of a hay-rick.

"There," he exclaimed, "a few turns more and it would be roasted, feathers and all. By jove, Terence, campaigning makes a fellow very hungry and dreadfully unprincipled. What a joke we think all this is!—but how savage we'd be if the French

were potting our domestic animals about Clapham Common."

And we three marauders pricked along the plain with our plunder in our wallets till we got nigh the line of the cavalry skirmishers which had just halted in a hollow. On the ridge in front of them there was a dotted line of horsemen, which advanced towards us. As they came nearer, the long flagless lances and the round bullet-like heads of the Cossack horse were made manifest.

"The *canaille* have got something behind them," said Hood, "as we shall see presently."

The Cossacks came on bravely waving their lances, and their lively little horses curvetted prettily down the slope. Then came a tiny puff of smoke from one, and then another popped off his carbine, and the fire ran from one to the other along their line, and their horses pranced and kicked about more friskily than ever. Our skirmishers answered, and in their ranks too was equal commotion, and much gambadoing, buck-jumping and rearing ; but no one was hurt, and the result of the spattering of small-arms was, now and then a little dust knocked up from the dry ground, or a singing in the air as a bullet wandered on its errand.

"It's a capital illustration of the value of cavalry

fire," said Hood. "But look, there they are in earnest!"

He pointed to the hill in front, and there indeed rose in sight a forest of lances. Next there appeared a dense mass of horse which halted on the sky-line in three divisions; the centre dark blue, the right white, and the left a light grey.

"Ho! ho! my lads, I thought so," continued the major. "There is my Lord Cardigan and his Brigade, but where the deuce are his guns? These fellows will soon let us have a taste of their iron."

Our skirmishers were falling back. The Cossack line followed them with derisive cheers. Suddenly the centre square of dark blue on the ridge shook itself out, and opening right and left uncovered eight black specks on the hill. Out flew from one of them a fat puff of white smoke, and ere one could count twice a sharp swishing sound heralded but an instant in advance the visit of the round shot, which pitched right under my pony and covered the major and Standish with a violent shower of earth, small stones, and dust.

"We are right in the line of their fire on the cavalry! They take us for the staff, perhaps, owing to this gentleman's splendid gold band. Come over to the left flank," advised our Mentor, who never

stopped puffing his cigar for a moment. And as he spoke a shell burst over us and I heard the singing of the fragments; and swish, came another shot! and whizz! whizz! whizz! shot after shot all around us! But Hood was imperative against any rapid movement. "No cantering! No galloping! A quiet trot to the flank, if you please, gentlemen."

It was now a very pretty sight indeed. The cavalry was slowly falling back, wheeling in alternate squadrons, with face to the enemy as they retired, whilst the Russians pressed forward with their guns as if to come down on us ere the Brigade could reach the cover of its artillery and the advancing army. In the distance behind us appeared the British, moving on like Atlantic rollers, and tracing the green plains with bands of scarlet and white; and through the dust-clouds which came up from the tramp of horses and the wheels of bounding gun-carriages we could make out the artillery hastening to the rescue. The Russian guns ceased not to ply the cavalry, and here and there a horse fell or the ranks shook for a little as a missile found a victim. But the tables were soon turned on the enemy—a British battery, unlimbered close to us opened fire—and seconded by another, soon checked the Russian horse and forced them to gather up

their guns. Presently they vanished over the hill again, and were seen no more.

“What was it all about, sir?” puffed a stout Rifle captain, very red in the face from running along with his company, into which the last Russian round shot rolled slowly, to the great damage of a poor terrier, which ran at it, and lost all his teeth in consequence. “Are we engaged with the enemy?”

“It was near being a surprise of our cavalry, that’s all, sir,” replied Hood. “More by chance than good guidance it wasn’t. But the lads behaved beautifully.”

The armies halted for the night soon afterwards, close to the banks of the little stream. I do not believe it was intended to do so, or that the sources of our water supply had been thought of beforehand ; but I do know that in that march there was a disintegrating force which was alarming to a novice. The effect was not obvious till the regiments had settled down in their bivouacs. Then the enormous amount of straggling became apparent, as hundreds of men haunted the camp fires, asking after their regiments, and as baggage and transport and horses became mingled in the lines. I picketed my pony near a fire which Hood’s ser-

vant had lighted, and with Standish and Hood watched with great admiration the Armenian cooking our kid and the guineafowl.

“Where were our pistachio nuts?” asked Standish, cheerily. “Well, I never dined more heartily or better in my life, and Agapo is a *cordon bleu*. A pipe and to bed, say I.”

The major was very moody. He got up, and walked among the men, who were almost invisible, for the night was dark though starlight, and there were few watchfires. Standish and I were asleep by the embers ere he returned. He touched me lightly on the shoulder, and whispered—

“Get up, and take a stroll for a moment! I have a word to say to you.”

I followed him in silence, treading carefully among the sleepers, as he threaded his way onwards till we came to the lines of the sentries in front, and were challenged.

“Look, and tell me what you see there, Brady.”

“I see a red glow in the sky for miles yonder and fires innumerable.”

“Not quite innumerable. I have been trying to count them through my glass, and putting twenty Russians for each fire, I can make out there must be about forty thousand of them.”

“I had no idea we were so near.”

“Aye! that’s the point. You saw all that cavalry to-day? They have at least three thousand horse, I hear. They know to an inch where we are, and could have marked us down like a bird. Our men are worn out—the enemy are fresh. If their general is worth a pinch of snuff, he will slip his horse at us and send his artillery to complete the confusion. Though we are so near, the generals have never thought of running up a trench, or covering a few batteries of guns with an *épaulement*, and—Hallo! what’s that?”

It was a man with a large paper lantern, which he held above his head, in one hand, whilst with the other he made violent snatches and clutches in the air. He came nearer, and the light revealed the features of Doctor Blossom. He was out hunting moths! “I caught such a beauty just now, Mr. Brady. Quite new. It will be an immense reputation:” and he went onwards in pursuit, with his lantern casting a halo around him.

“He’s a type of us all—the horrid old fool, with his night-moths and butterflies. There he is, floundering about in search of his hobby, and quite happy or careless, although he may never see to-morrow’s sun. I’m a croaker, Brady, you see: but I confide

my alarms to a non-combatant. I have seen a good deal of war, and my comfort is that the fellow on the other side is likely to be as stupid or careless as we are. Let us come to our fire, if we can reach it, and sleep in hope."

It was not so easy to find our way back. The major was attached to the staff, but he had not secured quarters inside the farm-house, and, as the fires had nearly all died out, there was no guide but his knowledge of the distribution of regiments in brigades. As we were making inquiries of the sentries, I caught sight of an officer muffled in a cloak, who was seated before an expiring fire, his elbows on his knees, and his chin resting on his hands. I approached gently to ask our way, leaving the major engaged in controversy with an angry quartermaster, who objected to be walked upon. A piece of wood fell into the fire, and crackled up with a sudden flame, which lighted up this man's face. It was Gerald Desmond. At first I thought he was asleep, but though his lids were closed, there came slow, welling tears, which trickled down his cheeks, and, as he raised his hand to wipe them away, I saw a miniature in his palm. He kissed it passionately, placed it in his breast, buried his face in his hands, and his figure heaved, agitated by

some great passion. I own I was surprised that he could feel so deeply, and that so light-hearted and callous a man should be thus moved. I checked my impulse to speak. I was bound to respect his sorrow, but the major calling out, "Hollo, Brady! here we are—it's all right!" roused up Gerald Desmond, and, shading his eyes from the fire, he saw me, and without rising, beckoned me over.

"What a meeting," he exclaimed, "my good doctor! I have been looking for you high and low since we landed. Before that, I never could get away to root you out, and we were always miles apart. How are you?"

"Oh! I?" he resumed in reply to me, "well, not very well—a touch of fever, I suppose. We mustn't talk too loud, as inside the tent there is my great chief, the valiant Crookencre, and if he values anything more than himself, it is his rest. And what news have you?"

"None. And you, Captain Desmond?"

"Don't 'captain' me, please, Terence. My uncle and Mary always call you Terence in their letters, and I will take the same liberty, if you don't mind—eh? Very well, then. And I must be Gerald to you! I have heard this very morning; and it's not good news either. The baronet is very hard set to make

both ends meet, the property is in such a state. There are no rents coming in, but the old mortgage holders are lively. They are on their way to Nice, if not there now."

"But, Miss Fraser," I interrupted, "what of her? Have they heard anything?"

"No! And what matters it, after all? She's safe enough, wherever she is, I'll be bound."

"Miss Butler is quite well—so I learn by the last mail."

"Yes, I believe so!" And he was silent. "It is getting cold," he said, after a few minutes. "I will try to get a little sleep." As he stood up to bid me good night, a miniature fell from his jacket, and I stooped to pick it up.

"Don't touch it, sir," cried Gerald, passionately, and put his foot on it. But I saw the face by the fire. It was not Mary Butler's.

CHAPTER X.

THE ALMA.

My readers will have learned, if they care to know anything about my character and feelings, that I am by nature one of the quietest of mortals, and will have recognised the perverseness of fortune which has thrust me into perpetual discords, broils, squabbles, fights, and scenes of violence since my birth. And now here was I, on a sunshiny warm afternoon on a lovely autumn day, toiling up a hill which might have been a ridge removed from the infernal regions with all its demon population! Tumult, indescribable and infinite! the noise of cannon, for which there is no word, for it is not a roar, nor is it thunder; the scream of shells, the rush of shot, the deadly song of the leaden birds in continuous flight around, the storm of human voices in all the variety of sound of which they are capable—command, angry urgency, pain, imprecation, hate, furious outcry, and passionate appeals for

help and mercy ; all mingled together, with a crackling and hissing of flames from burning villages, and a ringing treble of musketry ; this was the music to which the play was going, the actors terribly in earnest, some only caring to get away if they could, others only anxious to kill or be killed, so that the agony were over soon. With faces blackened with powder and eyes staring wildly, and teeth clenched and with tongues lolling out, the men pressed up the slope, some loading and firing coolly, others mechanically, moving on with very little formation towards the grey-coated columns posted above. I could see their brass-spiked helmets flittering about as the gunners loaded and fired, and the figures of the men as they sponged out and rammed home, stood out distinctly against the snowy folds of smoke from the guns. To see a man fall gently forward on his face and hands as though he had tripped on a stone and would get up immediately, and yet to know he would never stir more,—to see another spring up in the air, drop his firelock, clap his hand to his heart, and plump into the grass,—to see a man pirouette and reel and drop, and try in vain to rise,—to see a man tumble and roll over again and again like a rabbit shot in full run,—to see a man stagger, lean against his musket, slowly incline

himself to the ground and there lean on his arm whilst one hand pressed the wound,—to see a man topple abruptly and then crawl away, dragging a broken leg behind him,—to see a body stand for a second ere it fell, without a head, or the trunk and head lying legless,—to see in the line of a rush of grape a track of dead and dying, just as small birds are cut down in winter-time by boys in a farm-yard—this was in a few minutes quite familiar to me, and was far less terrible than one glimpse of some terror-stricken wretch as, in fear of being trodden to death, he sought to creep away to a quiet place to die; or the mute imploring faces of the wounded who all at once felt their part in the day was over. I was going I knew not where, for my orders had been of the vaguest. I was to place myself wherever the divisional medical officer might appoint. But he was not visible anywhere. And as to “wherever my services were needed,” why, there was a fair field anywhere. But it was quite evident I was not on the right track at present, as I was too much in the way of glory and had no right to its favours. Old Bagshaw (he used to be so civil) shouted, “What the —— are you doing here, sir? Go back to the rear at once, sir!” as, waving his sword and mounted on a weak-legged Turkish pony,

he led the Bengal Tigers over the broken ground. Major Savage, a grey-haired, melancholy veteran, who was much oppressed by Mrs. Savage and many tyrannical children, was quite another being. He curvetted about on a lumbering commissariat cart-horse, roaring, "Now, then, that 'ere number one company, whatever's the reason you don't close hup, Captain Wilmot? Forerds, number one company—forerds! Hincline your left a little forrerder, number two. That's it, my lads!"—and so passed on. I saw the Tigers halt in an irregular line and open fire fiercely to check a grey block of helmeted infantry which came gravitating down the slope of the hill. In another second a lumbering commissariat-horse came plunging past me, flinging up its great heels and making for the river.

Bagshaw was quite right—I could be no use where I was. There was no one to help me to dress a wound or to carry away a wounded man, and I turned down towards the Alma, skirting the flaming village, and threading my way amongst the bodies, or avoiding the advancing battalions. The din was loud as ever, but a word of command, or a cry of pain can be heard through all the uproar of battle. To the right of the burning houses De Lacy Evans, with a small staff, was scanning the

progress of the action on our left through his glass. He saw that the Light Division, though they had drawn the teeth of the Russians, were broken and over-matched. "Steele," he exclaimed, "ride over to His Royal Highness, and say I think the First Division should advance at once."

Down, pouring solidly towards the stream, came the granite-like columns of the Muscovite; and then through the eddying smoke the bearskins of the Guards drew in sight, amid the foliage of the vineyards, and the river was dammed by that living wall. They arrested and gathered up the stubborn *débris* of the gallant Light Division. Soon the gentle slope was seamed by black and scarlet bands, belted with musket flashes and bayonets. On the left of the Guards we could just catch through the trees the bonnets of the Highlanders; behind them, motionless, part of the Light Division in square. Further on the left, out on the plain, were all our cavalry. Behind us, in splendid order, was advancing the Third Division. A group of officers has just passed down to the river close by; a one-armed man, in blue frock-coat and cocked hat with white plume—we all know who he is—cantering gallantly and gaily, straight for the banks crested with Russians, as if he were at a review, leading his staff

to do battle. On our right, the French are clustering on the hills and knolls, and fight under the thick vapour of their ever-rolling musketry. The general of the Second Division has galloped with his staff by the burning village to his men, who are engaged in desperate conflict with the enemy on the right of the Guards. Wherever I turn there is work for me.

Strange enough, but true! In the midst of all the clamour and the smoke, the swallows were swooping about in the most unconcerned manner possible, rejoicing may be in the great embarrassment of the flies! Once, indeed, a very large bird of that description, as I thought, took off a piece of my hat; and I learned that bits of shell may be mistaken for swallows when there is much smoke about.

Everywhere cries for help, or mute looks of entreaty—lint! and bandage! and tourniquet! And for ever that roar incessant, and with all the monotony of death in its tone! Is it never to end?

Presently there came a break in the storm—a few fitful outbursts as violent as the intensest roll of musketry—then a booming of cannon—It rolls further and further, then dies out—then come dropping shots—another rolling fire, and—“What is that?” A ringing cheer! Oh, such a cheer! It is the wild

hurrah of ten thousand men as they stand victorious in the sloppy grass, amid the dying and the dead, on the ridge of the Alma. And far away in the distance we hear the fanfare of the trumpets and the triumphant rattle of the drums of the French, whose dark masses crown the summits of the cliffs as the declining sun falls on the sheen of arms, and touches eyelids which will never open to its rays again.

When the soldier's work is done the surgeon's begins. Let me spare my readers that night of horrors. I feared every moment to behold the face of some old friend. I dreaded lest I should encounter the look of Gerald Desmond, as the wounded were borne into the barn which formed the operation room and hospital. But he was safe.

"Captain Desmond, I can assure you, is not touched," said poor old Bradshaw, "I saw him at the General's quarters as they were moving me down here after all was over. It was a confounded shame to leave us without supports—a regular massacre, sir. I will talk, sir—if it's my last word, I will say it was shockingly muddled. My dear old Tigers!—we've had a dreadful mauling, but if you doctors can save my leg I'll live to command them again, please God. I defy that rascal who has

been persecuting me all my life to stop my promotion this time ! I've done him now !"

And we did save old Bagshaw's leg, and he lived to command the Tigers at Inkerman and in the trenches, till he received a wound beyond our skill to cure, for his leg was carried off with the sharpest precision, and he may now be seen stumping down Pall Mall of a warm afternoon to his club, to expatiate on the "confounded shames" to which he is still exposed by his unknown persecutor, in the matter of regimental colonelcies.

The morning after the battle, as I was going over with a report to Dr. Blossom, I perceived a man on the slope near the Head Quarters tent, in front of which there was a table laid out for breakfast, with many covers and a snow white cloth. He was writing on a plank, which rested on two pork barrels, and as I rode up I saw it was Standish. "I hear we had a great victory, and I'm glad of it. But I really should not have known it. I have had such a night!" he exclaimed,—“had to carry my saddle up the hill, on my head, and sleep on it, as my miserable pony's leg was broken! Nothing to eat till this moment, when a commissariat officer gave me a slice of leather. Can get no information—have no ink or paper either!"

"What's that?"

“Oh, yes! I’ve made ink with gunpowder, and that paper I found lying about near a Russian’s havresack, and my pen is made of a straw, as you see. My servant has bolted again, and I seriously think of following his example. Oh, Brady! if you saw all the tailing-off there was towards the rear at one time, and if you could have seen the fellows hiding—yes, hiding under shelter of the high bank of the Alma as I forded it, and now they’re swaggering about. Pooh! I’m sick of it. And the smells, too!—it’s horrid work after all.”

Ah well! As I write the memories of those times—few short years as they are ago—seem almost to belong to antiquity. The halt by the river—and the flank march—the view from Mackenzie’s Farm, as we looked on the valley of the Tchernaya and saw the old crumbled crags of Balaclava—the snow-white houses draped in vines—the farms in the plain—the blue sea beyond, and the frowning headlands—the deep gorge of Inkerman—the waters of the harbour of Sebastopol—the spires of the churches—the casemated tiers of the forts and the masts of the submerged navy—and then the triumph of the moment when we, seeing our prey beneath, poured down the steep, and like streams of lava spread over the plateau.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SIEGE AND THE TRENCHES.

THEN came the work of the siege—the landing of stores and guns—the explorations of the country—reconnaissances of the city and of its works, where soldiers, men, women, and children toiled for ever at fast-rising mounds of earth.

And in due course came the cry of joy from home, the full reward for toils and perils.

“I cannot tell you how delighted and proud I am to see your name in the *Gazette*,” wrote Mr. Bates. “My first thought was how my dear old friend would have rejoiced, had he lived to see the day. I think he would have posted it up in the room at Lough-na-carra alongside the general orders in which your father was promoted. Major Turnbull was very much pleased also, but he is as perverse as ever, and says if he were you he would now throw up doctoring, and get a commission. I mention this to show how far gone he is.

Gerald Desmond must have been in the thick of the fight, for Crookencre's division was severely handled. Mat Casey has passed through on his way home, with a ball through his neck. He tells me you dressed it. Is it true the French ran away? He's not quite sure whether it was the French or the Turks. He has taken an eagle, he says; but the major swears the Russians don't carry eagles. Perhaps it was a humbler bird, and one not so hard to catch. Turnbull wants to know what is meant by calling Boycott a promising officer? He has thirty years' service. It is well this war is so soon to be over as we hear, for you are wanted back badly. It would please you to hear how Sir Denis has written about you. I'm failing fast, as you can see from this scrawl, and I want to see you before I say my "Nunc Dimittis." Turnbull and I are a pair of wretched old cripples; but because he has served, as he terms it, he gives himself no end of airs, and he puts himself to dreadful pain, trying to walk stiff and straight as of yore."

And then another,—rather cold and formal I thought.

"MY DEAR BRADY—The intelligence of the victory won by the Allies over the Russians on the

river Alma left Mary and myself in much suspense about my nephew, as there was some mismanagement and delay in giving the names of the killed and wounded ; but at last our anxiety was relieved, and we were enabled to await the details of the battle without anxiety on his account, though I have lost more than one valued friend and acquaintance in the action. The *Gazette*, with the despatches, has now appeared, and I was not surprised to see Gerald's name in it, for I may say without foolish pride, that he belongs to a race which has never failed in such trials as these ; but my niece and I were much pleased indeed at finding your name in the honourable record, and I congratulate you most sincerely and warmly on the distinction you have attained, and trust it will be but the encouraging prelude to a career of reputation and rapid advancement in your profession. I only see one drawback to it. There is a person who, I am assured, watches as well as she can all that goes on over here, and although she may not see the papers or hear of them, and thus be left in ignorance of your good fortune, I am quite sure should it be otherwise, you will be put to use in her never-ceasing intrigues, and be exposed to immediate operations. She has not been heard of lately by

my Indian correspondents, but there is no ground for felicitating you on her demise, and the means of concealment in Native Courts for women are almost unlimited. Since the affair of the Kanawagee jewels, and the attack on the Government escort by the Tangree people at her direct instigation, it is believed she will not venture into British territory, and the Commissioner has been assured she has left Tangra, and has reason to think she went to Lucknow, and returned thence to Jhansi. Although there is no evidence of the fact, I think it likely Fraser is with her. He has never taken as yet any notice of my communications respecting the flight of his daughter, which has caused us such deep regret and pain. I had notices of the destruction of the Castle inserted in the Indian press, and my agents have been most active in their search after him; but after he was dismissed the service, and his name was removed from the list—not to speak of his regiment being called by the name of his second in command, Poppleton—he has not been seen by any European, so there has been no clue to him since the court-martial, in anticipation of the result of which it was I took poor Mabel to live with us. You will be sorry, I am sure, to learn that there is small prospect of our being at the Castle

for some time, as I have no money to rebuild it, and the place is falling into ruin. In fact, the estate is becoming rapidly worse, because the land is so pauperized that the people pay no rents, and devour our capital in the form of poor-rates."

And Sir Denis went into a treatise which I reserved for another time, as I was going to read Mary's letter a second time, having merely glanced over it, of course, at first.

"DEAR TERENCE,—The news for which I was waiting most anxiously did not come as soon as that of the great victory which has caused so much rejoicing—and many many others must have felt as I did. But oh, how they are to be pitied who have lost all they loved on that dreadful day! We were unspeakably delighted, and deeply thankful I hope, when we heard of Gerald's safety and of yours; and I confess that was so much to be content with, I have not been as enthusiastic as I ought to have been about my cousin's feats of arms and the honours you too have gained in dispatches. Who is General Blossom who reports about you so favourably? I have been obliged to read every word in the papers about the action, and my uncle has called

me to account several times for unbecoming expressions of pity for the mothers, wives, and sisters of the poor Russians whom we glory in destroying so ruthlessly. All I hope and pray for is that the war will soon be over, and that we may see you both soon again. We live as quietly as usual, but my uncle is much perplexed about the condition of the estate, and fears we must go back there for Gerald's sake, though the Castle can scarcely be made fit to receive us. He is for ever writing letters, corresponding, planning, and working; and it is only a pity he is not dealing with a more promising subject, as all the people are full of admiration for his ideas, but say they cannot be carried out. My uncle has some theory in his head about Mabel Fraser, which he will not tell me. He often says, 'Do not give yourself further uneasiness about her. I'm sure she will turn up quite safe some day, and when she does I hope we may all be glad of it.' From Rose Prendergast I hear at intervals. I think she fears becoming a nun, lest she should be shut off from her brother, whom she loves very much, notwithstanding his neglect of her. I believe, from what she says, he has been somewhere in the East for a year nearly. What a strange wandering sort of creature he must be! It is a pity that, with his great gifts in

learning languages or doing whatever he applies himself to, he should be such a hopeless outcast, and be unable to protect poor Rose. The lady who has bought their place went over it with the lawyer, M'Turk, and remained there a few days, but returned no cards. She is a Mrs. Allayne. She drove over to Lough-na-Carra, and also to the Castle, but paid no visits, and went away in a great hurry, leaving the management of the place to her agent in London. When she called at Lough-na-Carra she wore a thick veil, but the servants say she is a very handsome woman. She was very eager to know all about the attack on the Castle and the fire and poor Mabel's disappearance. But I am beginning to gossip. My uncle's bell is ringing, and I have to copy a long paper, headed 'Private and confidential,' before we go out. I am the repository of most important secrets, if I could only understand them. We long for the post, and I am sure you will find time to write to my uncle or me always. Of course Gerald will write to me every post, but he apparently has not so much time on his hands as you have. And so, dear Terence, with my best wishes, I am, as ever, your old friend—becoming very old indeed,

“MARY BUTLER.”

“Of course, Gerald will write to me.” Why “of course?” As I was pondering over the nature of the phrase I saw Sir Denis’ letter on the ground in my tent; and Gerald’s name came out of the writing to my eyes, and running through his long disquisition on the inherent incapacity of mankind in general to make anything out of the Irishman in particular, “Under all the circumstances,” I read, “it is therefore very good news that the war will not last long, as Mary’s marriage ought not to be deferred, and indeed but for her desire not to hasten the engagement, and my own wish to know something more of her future husband, it would have taken place ere this. I can scarcely be indifferent to the tempting offers which have been made to me in the most flattering manner to accept office in India, and independently of the pecuniary advantages and the benefit to the estate, I feel I can do the State there some service, and escape the constant irritation caused by baffling these rascally pettifoggers, legal and political, who infest Ireland. Mary must be settled comfortably before I can think of going, and if ever I have to leave her it must be by stratagem; you, I fear, feel how dear she can make herself to all around her, and how necessary she becomes to one’s happiness once he

has felt the elevating effect of her mere simple goodness and purity."

Now I knew this all along—I knew it, and yet I was not prepared for seeing it in black and white. When my servant summoned me to church parade he started. "Are you tuk bad, Doctor?" he inquired anxiously. "I'll run for Doctor Blossom, if you wish, as you don't attend on yourselves. Shall I, Sir?"

The day after we went up to the front the division was formed up on the verge of the plateau, from which the ground receded and fell towards Sebastopol. The morning was bright and clear, and the houses in the city were as yet distinct and sharp-cut, in their integrity of roof, and wall, and window. The sound of the church bells came at intervals to the ear, and between the oakum-coloured earthworks which now girded the city, and the bistre-hued lines which marked the batteries whereat we were labouring, ascended the hum of voices from the working parties. The regiments, in forage-caps, diminished sadly in rank and file, and much dilapidated in uniform, were in a hollow square, in the centre of which was placed a big-drum, as a reading desk. The general and his staff were stationed in front of the drum; and as I arrived, our chaplain, the Rev.

Elias Whittlebury, was advancing towards his reading desk. He began service under some difficulty ; for not quite understanding the nature of the preparations, he was raising one leg to get up on the drum when an excited band-master rushed out, roaring—

“ Ye’ll go through her, I tell ye ! Take off yer fut ! She’s the only big-drum in the whole division ! ”

And again the congregation was rudely disturbed. The Russians had probably been watching for some time in wonder the red coats on the edge of the plateau, and had refrained from decisive action, but, resolved at last to try what we were at, as we were within range. We had reached the most solemn part of the Litany. The responses of the men, deep and full, rolled down the ranks after the thin, sharp voice of Mr. Whittlebury.

“ Give peace in our time, oh Lord ! ” he quavered, and the sonorous combination of his prayer rang through the square. “ Because there is none other that fightest for us, only thou, oh God ! ”

Two cotton-like balls suddenly grew out of an ugly redoubt, which grew and swelled in quick expanding folds in the clear, still atmosphere.

“ Look out for shells ! ” cried the sentries, along the edge of the plateau.

“To-whoo! to-who! to-whoo! to-who! tootle! tootle-too!” sung the voices in the air, rapidly approaching.

“Shells!” shouted every one; and in an instant the Rev. Whittlebury, followed by most of his flock, was scudding away from the ground he had occupied, leaving the big drum, and the general and his staff and officers looking up with craning necks at the two iron globes, one of which burst with a gush of hot air and a shower of splinters right over the drum, and the other burying itself nearer to the flying congregation, threw over them a cloak of dust and earth.

There is little society or social intercourse in an army on active service. Each corps and regiment keeps to itself, and breaks inside itself into fragments and small coteries. The mess disappears, and officers, surly as Achilles, feed in their tents apart, or associate in knots tied by self-interest. The Tigers never go near the Slashers, the Greens only see the Reds on their flanks, front, or rear, in line of march, or in trench reliefs. The Heavies are away down at Kadikoi, and the Lights are towards the front. The Artillery are so busy, they have less time than ever to shake off ubiquitous exclusiveness, and the Engineers are taping and measuring and

calculating and drawing, each man for himself. And I, in my little way having, alas! plenty to do, had no time to visit or gossip. So much the better; for I had no leisure to dwell on my own private cares, save when I sat down in my tent to my tin of ration dispensed by Mr. Malony, *secundum artem*, that is, raw or burnt as the case might be. When the tent was drawn close, and the candle stuck in a bottle was placed on the top of a cask which served as my table, I was sometimes left alone for awhile, and communed with my own thoughts, and was still. The canvas walls indeed flapped with the concussion of the artillery, for our bombardment had begun, and was going on continually, and the obscurity was relieved by the constant flashes of the cannon in the batteries below; but these speedily became the natural accompaniments of every night, and the only *désagremen* they caused inside the tent was the shaking down of the myriads of sleepy flies which hung on aloft round the tent pole. By day there was ever-recurring duty—sometimes in hospital, sometimes in the trench. I could not go so far as Crookencre's Brigade to see Gerald Desmond; but I knew he was safe, as day after day I looked over the return of the wounded in

Blossom's office ; and once I saw him—a long way off—with a batch of staff officers following his chief, who was reconnoitring Sebastopol from the Lime-kilns.

The bombardment opened. It had failed. We walked back from the White House, whence we had looked on at the scene—beheld the advancing fleet, saw Sebastopol girt round with smoke and fire, and torn with shot and shell, and still replying with increasing energy, till the earth shook as inverted cones of earth and guns and bodies were tossed up into the air from the exploded magazines of our allies. Hood, now in charge of a section of trench and battery, effected material alterations in the aspect of the Malakoff tower, and removed the upper story by a vigorous pounding. The British gunners reduced the Redan to eloquent silence, or ejaculations few and far between. But the French, whose trenches were on the lower ground used whilom by the enemy for practice ranges, and whose batteries were nearer, more lightly armed, and less scientifically made, were simply snuffed out.

“Yes, indeed, snuffed out,” repeated Standish, “and the assault can't take place for ever so long. So much the better, some of my friends

say; for they don't think it would succeed, and if it did not, we should be in a bad way. But then we must go at it some time or other, and I think if we have any Christmas dinner at all it will be eaten on this classic ground. I should like to know what he thinks," he added, nodding towards a horseman riding in advance of his staff, and followed by an escort of hussars. "How silent they are!—no wonder. They galloped past and nearly over me this morning early, laughing and talking so cheerily. And now all mute as mice. Well, my boy, I have my troubles too! And I dare say you have yours too, eh? Of course you have. It appears I made all sorts of mistakes in my account of that battle, shocking to say. You saw me writing it. There's old Bradshaw been at me, all spurs and moustaches and indignation, to ask what I mean by not saying the Tigers—and they alone—won the day. Colonel Grummett wishes me to state that it was he directed the guns which obliged Menschikoff to retire. Sergeant Todgers laid the piece which decided something else. The Slashers are indignant because I said they came up a hollow, as they swear they were on top of a ridge; but I have proved to Major Babbs' satisfaction, that as they got on the ridge they must have come up the

hollow. Then all the fellows who come privately and confidentially to give me bits of information, which generally means what they have done themselves, and what others ought to have done but didn't, are savage at my neglect. The cavalry are in a bad frame of mind, because they are chaffed for not pursuing the Russians. The General of Division and the General of the Light Brigade wont speak to each other. The Admiral of the Fleet is jealous of his second in command. Tunks is furious because the credit of laying the buoys is given to Junks, who merely superintended it. Hawser, who invented Balaclava, is wroth because Tompion's name appears as discoverer. The P.M.O. is regarded by the General in Chief as a natural enemy, because he wants ambulances and hospital impedimenta. The Commissary-General, who feeds you all, is in a constant state of war with head-quarters. When the quartermaster-general approaches the adjutant-general, the very feathers in their cocked hats bristle, as if they were the crests of rival bantams. We hate our allies the French: I daresay the French hate us. We both hate and despise the Turks; and the latter, poor devils! have every reason to return the compliment. It's all wrangle, jealousy, thwarting,

cavilling all round, and I'm quite sorry and shocked at it all. 'But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.'"

"Surely you are drawing a very gloomy picture, my dear Standish."

"I am not adding a touch of colour. In fact, it is but a very feeble, washy pen-and-ink sketch in the most meagre outline. As an example: Last night a medical party called on me, 'in confidence,' to abuse you, because you were named in dispatches for your exertions, whereas he swore he did your work, as he was attending you for delirium tremens."

"The rascal! What was his name? Standish! I insist."

"My dear Brady, confidence can't be broken—I only laughed and said I did not write the dispatches—that I knew you very well, and saw you the very day he named. Poor human nature! The very men who are guilty of such littleness will, in their moments of inspiration, instinctively and uncalculatingly do the noblest things. Oh! the heart is much better than the head. The heart feels—the head thinks; the heart acts—the head plots and plans. Here is this army full of courage, devotion, and daring, and yet it is a hotbed of small dislikes, intrigues, and jealousies. It is a terrible profession

after all in which a man gains directly by the death of his comrade."

"Is not that so in all professions, Standish? You are becoming very morose and harsh I think. Does not Dr. Small feel a little flutter of something unlike pain when he hears the first man in his profession—that is, in his district—has been removed *ad auras superas*? Is there not a sigh of resignation or contentment heard in the chambers of our Temple friend when he sees the announcement of a judge's removal to the Courts above? Nay, may we not believe the doings of death among the hierarchy excite a more active sensation than mere pity in the labourers in the Church, and quicken the pulse of pale cloistered fellows and energetic country clergymen?"

"Perhaps so. But there is no *Gazette*—and no certainty. If Major Brown fall, Captain Smith must see in the *Gazette* his name very soon, 'vice Brown, killed in action.' That makes the difference. Even in peace time there are in our army at all events, and I dare say in that of our allies, many causes operating against the real *camaraderie* which is supposed to be so common by those who know nothing of the facts. There are questions connected with leaves and purchase cropping up

continually. But you, for example, have nothing of the sort in your branch of the service."

"Haven't I, indeed! You have just been letting out of the bag one of the many cats which would tear and claw me if they could, because I was mentioned by my Chief, and if any fellow brings in a new beetle some day, he may go over my head at once, in spite of the good old fellow's sense of justice."

As to what followed in order, is it not written in the Chronicles and recorded in books and enshrined in Gazettes? If Gazettes are not favourite reading, at least they bear testimony to the faith of those who wrote them. A generation is rising up—nay, it has arisen—which knows not the ragged Joseph who toiled and suffered for his brethren in a strange land. It is like enough never to read these Chronicles or Gazettes, for there is ever an interval between the wedding of Fact and Record and the birth of History which no student cares to study. But even now Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman are historical. Of those who fought, how little remains! For centuries men live and die in easy profession of an untested faith. Suddenly comes upon another race of believers a trial—an ordeal sharp and burning. And lo! the faggots crackle

and the martyr dies. So it is with the soldier. For years he is the mere laced and feathered ornament who struts about for the amusement of the spectators. His lace is jeered at and his feathers are the scorn of the philosopher. The moment comes—the *dies iræ*—when the Nation demands a sacrifice to Public Weal, or to Honour, or whatever may be the Idol which is led forth to battle; and the soldier becomes the Hero—almost the god. But what is the cost? The Chancellor of the Exchequer counts up his figures. There are so many officers and so many rank and file, and their price is so much a-head. Is it not fair? Must we not buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market? When we deal in blood and flesh and bones, should we not pay as little as we can? *Dulce est pro patriâ mori*. It is decorous also. ‘It is,’ says the washy French periphrasis, ‘the best of fates and the most worthy of envy.’ But at least let the country be the better of the sacrifice. It is a sentient Juggernaut under whose wheels the soldier bleeds. The immortality of the Gazette (long since defunct and embalmed in yellow paper and faded ink) is theirs who do and die, or who live on to find that the petty skirmish of to-day is more exciting to the world around them than the great victory ten years

old. To me all the terrible trials, and anxieties, and sorrows of that glorious gloomy winter appear now as insignificant incidents of my own personal life and history. How well, indeed, I remember Balaclava! But linked for ever with the recollection of that morning, when from the edge of the plateau I looked down on the hosts of the Russians carrying the redoubts spreading over the plain, and sabreing the Turks till they were broken by the thin red line, then swept off the field by the might of our Heavy Horse, pursued and charged home in the very centre of their battle by the scanty squadrons to whom Duty and Courage were trusted leaders, is the memory of the few lines which came to me in my tent, as I was summoned to turn out and heard the booming of the first guns. A few lines in that well-known hand!—they led me back to the days when I walked by her side and loved her with the childish love which became all that I lived for, as I lived on.

“I am much touched, my dear Terence,” she wrote, “by your kindness, and all the more because it is so utterly impossible for me to show you I deserve it. It is delightful to think that I have a friend on whom I can rely and to whom I can open my heart. I always look on you, dear Terence,^{as}

I used to do so many years ago, when we were children at Lough-na-Carra together, and when I was your elderly monitress. And what I have just read in your last letter" (the epistle I feared so much) "has strengthened, if that were possible, my trust in your ever-continuing regard."

And it is strange enough that on the very night of Inkerman, as I returned from my hospital tent, a letter from her lay on my little table, with a whole mail from home—Sir Denis, Mr. Bates, Major Turnbull, Rackstraw, Casey, Lord Bellbrook—everybody. I opened and read it. It was in my hand when I was aroused by the thunder of the Russian guns playing on our camp, and by the crashing of their shells among our tents, and I put it in my breast as I hurried in the fog to my duty at the hospital tent. That tent was literally blown to pieces by a shell! When I went back to camp, all that remained of my own tent was a charred stick, which represented the pole! Again, the night before the hurricane of the 14th November, which caused us such unutterable woe, I received another letter from her, and when I awoke in the morning it was beside me on the saddle which served as my pillow. So it was I came to look on a letter from her as a forerunner of some great trouble, but

also as a sure guarantee that I should escape from it.

Why should I dwell on the horrors of that winter? My story is running on. I will tell you now a portion of it, which seemed to me at the time like a nightmare. It is best told as I copy it from the pages of my journal:—

“*Jan.*, 1855.—I had a hard day of it. Poor Wilmot died at 3 P.M. yesterday. He was delirious at last, and his death very painful. Tiny very ill, and I can’t move him to Balaclava—lost Sergeant Evans, Corporal Malony, and four privates from dysentery and camp fever. All might have been saved if I could have given them proper food, clothing, and medicine. Also one private from shell wound in scalp. Am I doing my duty to my poor sick and wounded properly? How horrible this war is to me! The surgeon sees the machinery of glory at work—he is behind the scenes and can examine all the tricks and traps and practical working of the effects—amputations and extractions, and plugging of wounds, groans, bandages, gangrene, and death—so often the only and the best physician. We hear the Czar relies on General January, but he has powerful allies at home—I am too poor a creature to attend to

my duties properly. The news from 'home,' as I call it, is distressing. I can't get any of the clothes or comforts dear old Bates and Sir Denis and Mary have sent me. * * * A terrible night; warned to attend trenches. Fell in with party after dark, and went down the Valley of the Shadow of Death as it has been named. Snow deep in places—bitter cold wind. The men most extraordinary to look at—pieces of matting round their legs, and sacking and bread-bags round their bodies—feet bound in sandals of rags, head-dresses of all kinds. The Colonel in a sheep-skin, with the wool inside, and the skin curiously painted—his head in a muff sewed up at the top—men very weak—short rations just now—very silent as we marched down, crispering the snow under our tread. But to return to the trenches. We occupied advanced parallel and rifle pits, with French on our right. I was established in 3rd parallel in a battery, where there was a little shelter in a kind of hut built of gabions and sand-bags; Major, now Colonel Hood, commanding the artillery, beside me in his cloak. Camp very silent—could hear the clocks in Sebastopol. A round shot now and then comes whistling through the air, and we hear it thudding into the ground behind us—any one gone with it, I wonder? There is a pat-pat-a-

pat of small arms from the left, where the French and Russians carry on an active skirmishing ; but in our front are deep ravines, and we cannot get so near. Through my half-closed eyes I watch the star-like glitter of the fuses in the whirling shells as they sail in great circles through the air * * *

I was aroused out of my sleep by a man leaping on my body. The moon had risen, and showed a horrible sight. The parapet was swarming with our men, who were flying pell-mell from the trenches in front, mingled with the Russians. The enemy had crept up a ravine, rushed into our parallels, and then sweeping across the rifle pits, had come bodily up to the batteries. So sudden was it, Hood had no time to get his men together ; as I rose to my feet I saw a Russian drive his bayonet into the body of a man who was still asleep in his blanket. A Russian officer, close to me, levelled his pistol at Hood, who was rallying the runaways with surprising energy and coolness. I struck up his arm and the shot flew high, and as he turned upon me I ran him through the sword arm, but my foot slipped and I was thrown down in the rush of men. I tried in vain to rise—two men had fallen across my chest, and with them a gabion displaced from the parapet had rolled on my legs—I was helpless, but I could see and hear.

It was an awful scene. The shouts and curses of the combatants, the glistening of the steel in the moonlight, the angry faces, the chink of the sword and bayonet, and the pulpy sort of sound with which they ran home—the screams and cries, and the various attitudes of men struggling in the snow, locked in death-struggles, rolling over and over, falling, rising again, and above all the pale moon serenely sailing through the sky! The Russians only used their bayonets. There was no firing, but I heard the alarm in our camp, and the drums beating far away. And soon the trench guards behind us came pouring down and drove the Russians before them, so that once more the retreating enemy filled the battery which had been deserted by all but the dead and dying, when they pressed on in pursuit of our men. What I am relating passed in a second. A grisly moustached bullet-headed old man gave orders to spike the guns, and set the example himself, but my eyes were fixed on a younger man, whose figure and air recalled some one I knew. He led three or four men straight to the magazine of the battery, and turned at the entrance to give some orders to his followers. His flat cap, with a metal cross in front, was pulled over his brow, and the light was not clear enough to permit me to discern his features.

plainly, but I thought his eyes glowed with a fire I had seen before. Hurrah! here come our lads! Ragged, worn, pale, see how they follow that tall, grey-haired man, in the Engineer dress, who is flourishing a walking-stick, and mark how they rush down after Hood, who is making straight for the old nail-driving Russian! And here is old Bagshaw and the Tigers. Bravo, my lads! give it to them! See where the snow is stained with the blood of the poor fellows, bayoneted as they slept! The old Russian major stands at bay in the embrasure, and meets Hood's thrust by a skilful parry and lunge, which very nigh finished my good friend. He leaps into the ditch: he is the last Russian in the battery. There is a flash almost in my eyes. For a second I see the figure of the man who is deliberately discharging his pistol into a powder-barrel. It lights up a face about which there can be no mistake—Maurice Prendergast! 'Maurice!' I shrieked out, and, by an effort of maddened excitement, was rising from the snow, when there came a mighty blast of flame, and a confused ringing in my ears, and then I was lifted or thrown up like a straw in the air * * * * Maurice Prendergast had fired the magazine! That was my first thought when I woke from the dream of death. I was sure of it.

He was within a few feet of me. The scar on the cheek, the intense fierceness of his eye, every line in the tortured face were as plain as is the sunlight for the brief moment, but still how could it be he who stood there, in the uniform of an officer of Greek volunteers? It was no dream—I lay in the midst of mounds of earth, still smoking and hot—the parapets, sand-bags, and gabions had disappeared; the guns and platforms, overthrown, were sticking on end, or scattered up and down over the blackened snow and the upturned ground, from which yet came welling up the fumes of the explosion. A few men lay dead or dying around me, and trunks of bodies and limbs further off; as I, scarce venturing to think I was alive, arose, and staggered like a drunken man, the Russian artillery opened on the battery, and shot and shell tore through the rifted parapets and voiceless embrasures. But soon, from right and left, replied our batteries, and diverted their attention. Wonderful to relate, the loss turned out to be very small, considering the tremendous row the explosion made. Gordon, Hood, Bagshaw are all safe, though Hood is shaken and burnt (so am I, by-the-by); and the latter had the battery all right by the morning. Poor Nash is *non est*, and Pelter, of the Greens, and thirteen rank and file killed, wounded, or missing,

but we don't know yet how many suffered in the surprise. The old Russian, who turns out to be the major who led the attack, was found dead in the ruins. Our fellows escaped so well, because they had crossed over the parapet, and were 'chiveying' the enemy, when the magazine was blown up. No trace of the officer who was like Maurice—of course it's a mistake. But he had a scar on his cheek too. Could it be he? Nonsense—the idea is preposterous. But if it were, what a fitting end for that implacable nature.

The incident recorded above was but an event like another, and soon passed out of my mind, or was driven forth by the pressure of the struggle for life which came upon us that winter. Snow and chilling blasts—furious gales and driving rains—sleet and frost, and then, worst of all, rapid thaws and dense fogs compassed us round about. I was racked with fever, but I would not give in as long as I could contrive to crawl round among my patients, and it was a sore thing to know what could save them, without being able to apply the means. I then crawl back again into the hole which has been dug out by my servant, and to which my tent serves as a kind of lid, and there pore over my old letters and newspapers from 'home,' till my ration is cooked

and eaten, and it is time to turn in for sleep, or turn out for duty. I saw the gingerbread without the gilding indeed.

Standish was in Balaclava. Now and then I met him in the front, or pottering about the trenches. He had been living at the Head-Quarters Camp, but the day of the great storm his tent disappeared, and he was fain to seek shelter in an apartment in a miserable cabin in Balaclava, to which the room of Papadoulos's beehive was a state drawing-room. I visited him once—wading literally knee-deep through filth indescribable which blocked up the yard, and ascending by a shaky ladder-like flight of steps to a verandah, which led to his quarters, abutting on the harbour. The gaping floor of his room gave free access to the fumes of the reeking stable beneath, where diseased horses rotted and died. The plaster was off the walls, the windows filled in with paper and boards, and his bed was a buffalo robe, sent out to him from England, which was placed over the planks.

“It is a splendid bed,” he said, “if one could sleep in it, but I really fear some day the fleas will walk away with it. What would I not give to be *ordered away*! If I tell the truth I get into disgrace here, and am maltreated by every one, and if I don’t

tell the truth I get into disgrace at home, and neglect my duty. I get into such absurd scrapes too! The day after you saw me at Mrs. Papadoulos's, in Gallipoli, I had a scene with the authorities. I was writing to my chief with a steel pen, and in a moment of reflection I put it on my knee—it rolled off and disappeared through the floor. At once there rose from below a shrill cry, and in another moment Papadoulos, *furens in mediis*, was before me with her youngest born in her arms, and the deadly point still quivering in the infant's head. What odds against the event! She accused me of a design on Zoe's life—appealed to the police of France, and I was glad to get off for fifty francs. Look out at that window. Do you see those square boxes? There is a Turk sitting on the pile smoking his pipe. Well, they all are live shells. The other morning I threw a cigar end into the yard, in utter ignorance, and there was a provost-sergeant in my saloon in a minute, to inquire whether I meant to blow up the place."

Standish spoke of his young wife, and of his little miseries, and of his great ones, in the same mood.

"With all you fellows it's in the way of trade to do these things—to be, to do, and to suffer," he laughed. "But I am an interloper—a fault in the

stratum—nobody's death can give promotion in my corps—I may fairly say to my position, as Lovelace sang to his mistress—

“‘I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.’

Oh, it is a weary task, never to be thoroughly fulfilled—to look on from the insignificant Olympus of criticism on the turmoil of the fight—to note the defects in the order of battle—to see where Achilles is weak and Hector fails, and to hear the cries and see the wounds, and then, with earnest hand, to trace—or strive to trace, and all in vain—the outlines of that which changes for ever as you sketch, and to record the notes which are drowned as they are played by the crash of the ever-succeeding chorale of the tremendous opera of this grand maestro, who works on the cannon and the drum, and whose fingers now never tire.”

Standish had an incoherent mode of speech, but he could write more clearly than he spoke. I heard from him now and then, and read besides in his plain narrative news that interested me of the very events which were passing around me and of the very people I was among.

“You will be glad to hear Captain John Window, whom you irreverently call Jack, has quite

recovered from his wound, and is made a C.B. He has got the new ninety-gun screw, *Anaxandrown*, and is for ever out with his boats playing the deuce with the fishing stations and caviare depôts of the Ruskies, instead of having a regular go in, as he wants, at the forts and shipping below you.

“The firing last night was caused by Dodger Brockley, who mistook his way and got in among the French sentries, and when they challenged he shouted out, ‘Bono Ruski! Ruski Bono!’ ran down the ravine and set the whole camp alive. The French are savage; for they say the day before the sortie in which they were so badly mauled, when our battery was blown up, an English officer walked through their trenches, and suddenly leaped over the advanced parapet and bolted into a Russian rifle-pit, and that he was the very same man as the Dodger, for he had a scar on his face.”

It was from him, too, I first heard of Gerald Desmond’s wound—of his departure from Scutari—of his convalescence. I applied for leave to go down there, that I might be near him and so keep the vow I had made and earn her gratitude, though he had so utterly neglected me, and excited suspicions in my mind which I could not distinctly analyze. But I was refused. Morning, noon, and

night it was the same routine of painful duty month after month, for when plenty came with fine weather the work to be done increased, and what that led to none knew so well as the doctor, except the sufferers themselves.

CHAPTER XII.

MY INDIAN VISITOR.

THE first attack on the Redan — our inglorious 18th of June—was over. It was fatal to more than those who fell on the rugged glacis and cumbered the ground in front of the grey lines of the Russian batteries. But we shared the bread of bitterness with our allies. There was a great mortification spared to us, though there was enough of humiliation and pain for our army. There was plenty, there was sunshine, but there was sickness and there was sorrow in our tents. And the white-haired old man who commanded us, destined now, at the close of his career, to see for the first time the troops he was so proud of, turn their backs to the enemy, fell ill and died. He bore up with dauntless spirit, and with that passive fortitude, in which the impulsive, passionate St. Arnaud recognised the heroic type, against the calamities of the winter, the disappointment of his hopes, and the deadly delay

of the siege. Alma and Inkerman, and Balaclava, were famous names to add to the roll of our achievements. But in the despondency which came on him at last, there was no comforting reflection ; and although he was gracious and calm and unperturbed, if not cheerful, the glow of success which had given elasticity to his spirit was gone, and the bow broke. How sad it was for us when the dead chief was borne away from the shores of the Crimea ; and when his staff, clustering around his honoured bier, appeared to warn us that there was a new generation arising, forced into life in the heat of battle ! Wounds and death all around. Every hour a new victim—every day a fresh cargo going to the hospitals on the banks of the Bosphorus.

It was on one of the glowing evenings of a Crimean summer, when the sun, setting on its crimson bed stretched on the sea in the far west, was followed by the longings of the dwellers in the serried huts and tents—some of whom would never see its rise—that, as I was returning from a solitary ride to my hut in rear of Cathcart's Hill, and had just dismounted at the door, a stranger rode up, and inquired "if Dr. Brady was in?"

He was a young man of a slight, graceful figure, dressed in plain clothes, and with the air of an

English tourist ; and at first I supposed he was one of the many T. G.'s, or travelling gentlemen who haunted the camp ; but on looking at him, I saw he was of darker hue than the most weather-beaten European. The rays of the sunset lighted up his copper-coloured skin and full dark eyes. He handed me a few lines of introduction from Standish.

“ The bearer is an Indian Prince, whom I have met down here” (he wrote from Constantinople, where he had been obliged to go for a few days’ change of air), “ and who is on his way back to the East, after a repulse at the hands of the Government in an attack on certain lands and moneys which he thinks are his by right. He is very anxious to have a glimpse of the siege works, and as you are up in the front, I give him a few lines to say,” &c.

It was very provoking. I was engaged to dine at a neighbouring mess, and I could not go down with him to the trenches ; but I invited him to come with me to dinner, and assured him of a hearty welcome.

“ You forget, sir,” he said, “ or rather you do not know, I am a Mussulman, and I might be foolish enough to see something at dinner which would offend my prejudices, and cause me to offend your friends. Ah !” he continued, with a smile,

“do not think me such a fool. If I were hungry, I could eat pigs as well as the best of Christians. But the fact is, I have dined already. I only want to see the trenches. If you can put me in the way, and lodge me and the poor horse I hired at Balaclava, you will do more than I dared to expect, and will much cause my indebtedness to you.”

I sent for a pass to the head-quarters of the division, and led him to Cathcart's Hill, whence the panorama of Sebastopol, girt with its rampart, and encircled with the network of zigzags and parallels, lay before us, to explain the principal points before my servant returned. It was a beautiful sight—not such as might have greeted the eye from some heaven-kissing hill above the plains of Troy, but far grander and more terrible. Silence reigned perchance along the front. The reliefs were gathering to march down the ravines. I pointed out the French on our left and on our right, and our batteries and parallels, and the whole array of the Russian works, from the sea to the wall-like heights of Inkerman. His quick eye followed me; his intelligence grasped all; he scarcely asked a question, but stood, with his hand shielding his eyes from the sun, regarding most intently the British batteries, and counting the embrasures occasionally through

his glass ; nor was he unobservant of me. I found he was scrutinizing me closely with evident interest and curiosity.

“ You are great people, you English !” he ejaculated, at length. “ But you are not so great as you were. Here are you and those Rustums the French—and the armies of the Sultan—and the little Sardinian army—with all your fleets and your famous soldiers—beaten by the Russians ! No ! you are not so great as you were. And yet you think you will hold India for ever ?”

“ We were not beaten by the Russians, sir ! They have——”

My answer was interrupted by an outburst from the Redan, and the enemy’s batteries in our front. Shells burst along our lines—round shot tore up the parapets of our works, and some came lobbing and bounding up to the stones where we were standing in front of Cathcart’s Hill.

The Prince was deadly pale, for one of his hue. He turned as if to run ; his lips were blanched.

“ Do not mind, sir ; it will be only for a few minutes. It is the usual evening salute of the enemy to our reliefs. Look out ! here is a big fellow !”

The Prince grovelled in the dust as a thirty-two

pounder ploughed up a furrow and nestled in the hill-side.

My servant came down the slope at the same moment, and handed me a pass.

“Here’s the order, sir; and the General says you’ll be responsible for your friend, as you’ve sent up no name.”

The Prince rose, with quivering lips and an evil look, rather ashamed of himself.

“By-the-by, sir—or I should say, I presume, your Highness—I have not the honour of knowing your name; will you oblige me? I can fill in the order in pencil.”

“Azimoolah Khan,” he replied. “I am scarcely what you call a prince, but Europeans style me so in my own country.”

“My servant will show you the way down to the first parallel, Prince; and any officer on duty to whom you show the pass will give you every assistance and information. You will be sure to find my hut if you make your way back to Cathcart’s Hill; and bed and supper if I should not be back when you return.”

I went on my way to dinner. On my return, about eleven o’clock, my servant was waiting for my pony at the hut.

“The Prince wouldn’t go to the trenches, sir. He said he had seen quite enough ; and he’s drank a bottle of our brandy a’most, and is tumbled into your bed, sir.”

When I awoke from my sleep in a camp-chair next morning the Prince was gone. He rose soon after daybreak, and rode back to the harbour. On my table there was a note in a feminine hand :

“ Prince Azimoolah Khan’s compliments to Dr. Brady for kindness of attention. The Prince was as anxious to see Dr. Brady as he was the works of those great enemies whom the British and French cannot subdue. Events and Fate—who can then withstand them?—probably decree Dr. Brady must come to India. It would be well if he came soon. Why should he not leave an army destined to swift destruction? There are rich patrons of arts and medicine in India. *Dr. Brady may have friends whom he would like to see there.* If you come at any time inquire for me of Mohun, Bunneah of Cawnpore bazaar, whose name is well known, and show him this note, and to no other. I had more to say, but must get my ship, who sail early. Sir, believe me your friend,

“ HIGHNESS AZIMOOLAH KHAN.”

I started a little at the words underlined "Dr. Brady may have friends whom he would like to see there;" but next moment thought no more of the matter, and only laughed at the Prince's evident dislike to a near approach to the enemy after the specimen of their far-reaching aims, little imagining I should ever see him again.

To me, Quarries, the Redan, the Rifle-pits, the long labour of the trenches, brought but multiplied cares, anxieties, and loss of friends. The dear old friends—old, for in the life of camps friendships grow quickly—were dying out. Day after day I filled up the tabulated reports in which Death marshalled his columns and dressed out his array of battle. In the midst of all this dreadful monotony I heard by each mail how all were trembling at home for us, and how the heart of the country was out with us on that plateau. At last the drama drew to its close.

It was the day after the second assault on the city. Sebastopol had fallen, but we knew it not. All night long, and far into the morning, the very earth trembled under our feet, and the sky was scarred by the furnace blasts as fort, battery, and magazine were tossed into air by the sullen enemy and the flames leaped from house to house, so that

the dawn was paled by the glare of conflagration. As the sun set, the French clarions sounded a loud flourish from the Malakoff, to celebrate the repulse of the last column of the white-capped Russians. But we felt no pride in their triumph, and could only think of those who lay stark and stiff in the ditch of the Redan. I was kneeling beside the blanket on which my old friend Hood lay beyond all human aid.

The *Gazette* had come in; he was promoted major-general for service in the field. He was K.C.B.

“I knew I would beat him,” he muttered. “But, Brady, I never can live to find out who he is. That accursed deserter and traitor whom I have twice crossed swords with has escaped. Well, my dear lad! Major-General and K.C.B., and the widow will be Lady Hood! But I’ll not trouble them much for the pay. Oh, ’tis as well I should die, sir! I wish I had died long ago—that this steel had found me the morning I got my boys together for the last dash into the ravine at Inkerman to recover our guns. Why were there no supports? I tell you”—he tried to raise himself on his elbow. “Don’t stop me. Tell that confounded newspaper fellow, whom you know, that it’s true, as I’m a dying man—

let him print it, and put my name to it—we lost the Redan because we were not supported. The Tigers held it, sir, on the left; there were the Greens and Slashers and all the Brigade on the right; but we were mowed down in groups, and left to be—why, murdered, by Heaven! I saw the Ruskies gathering for their charge, and I looked for help in vain. My poor dear boys!—how they fought! But it was hopeless. I tried to keep them together behind a traverse, but they fell in files, and the enemy made a sudden swoop on us and drove us out. Yes, by Heaven! they ventured to level bayonets with us. A bullet-headed giant beat down my guard, and gave me what you know you cannot cure, just as that scoundrel with a red scar on his cheek called out to me, in good English, ‘Surrender, you fool!—surrender!’ I believe it was the effort I made to punish his insolence which enabled the men to rally and carry me off. What use? what use? I might as well have died as I lay!’

And, for all *I* could do, that was true.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TWO WARRANTS OF EXECUTION.

I KNEW for a long time past that Mary Butler was to be Gerald Desmond's wife; yet somehow I evaded the fact. I passed it by hurriedly, as a horse shies past an object in the dark.

It was unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. But I would not face the fence. I could not. I might be spared the torture of seeing it. I might die by some happy chance ere it occurred. Never did I allow the thought to linger—"Perhaps he may fall."

But the time of my great trial was approaching. Two letters which I received after the south side of Sebastopol was evacuated, tell their own story. I believe no prisoner ever read his death warrant with less hope of a reprieve, or walked to the block more calmly than I did.

The first was from Sir Denis. It ran thus:—

Oriental Club, Sept. '54.

“DEAR TERENCE,—You will understand the imperative reasons which render it necessary that my niece and Gerald should be married as soon as he is sufficiently recovered from his wound. I find it impossible to reject the handsome offer which has been made to me of an important post in India, and I could not enter upon my duties till I had seen her settled. There is every probability of peace very speedily, and Gerald can then retire from the army and live at Kilmoyle on all that can be rescued from the ruin of the property. You will not be surprised at a step which has been so long, as you are aware, the settled object of my life; but I am too well aware of your feelings to withhold from you the expression of my sympathy: and I tell you candidly that if Mary had given me the least cause for supposing she did not feel as I wished her to do, she would have been permitted to follow her inclinations, however pained I must have been at her decision. As I told you before, the connexion between the two families has been disastrous on more than one occasion, and you must be aware your own position would not justify you in marrying Mary were she averse to the union with her cousin and not indifferent to you. As the case stands,

you must only summon up your courage and bear what must be borne with fortitude. You have kept your secret nobly, and I appreciate your self-control and your conduct as they deserve, though you must not be offended if, in thanking you, I let you see I am aware of your real sentiments. *Miser ego miseris miserere disco.* In the arrangements I made of the property I have considered it right, knowing how you are circumstanced and the influence this marriage will exercise on you, to give you a rent-charge on the lands of Tullymore, which Mr. Bates and my lawyer have settled, and Gerald will, I have no doubt, give his consent to the proposal. We have modified the old settlements, and by the sacrifice of more than one-half of the estate, which will be disposed of in the Encumbered Estates Court this month, I hope to place Kilmoyle on a fair footing, though the rental will force Gerald and his wife to exercise a rigid economy and to place their establishment for some years to come on a very modest scale. We sail for Malta next month, on our way to Constantinople, as it may be desirable for Gerald and Mary to stay abroad for a few months after the wedding, so as to avoid our severe winter. She is not looking very well, and I fancy her anxiety about Gerald has been preying on her, but the last

accounts cheered us greatly, as, although he was only returned as "wounded," we did not know whether it was slightly or dangerously till we received his letter. I shall proceed to India as soon as I have seen the young people settled.

"You will be pleased, if you do not know it already, to hear Mr. Bates and Major Turnbull will accompany us to the East from Malta. The old man wishes to see you: he has some papers requiring your signature, and he has been informed that your regiment, in event of peace being signed, and the army being broken up, will probably be sent to the Cape. The gratification I should have experienced in informing you that intelligence has at last reached us of Miss Fraser is much lessened, if indeed it be not completely neutralized, by the circumstances in which she is placed. My niece has received a letter from her, many months old, of a very unsatisfactory and painful character. It is almost incredible what she relates. It was her father who carried her off the night the Castle was attacked, and who now keeps her in a melancholy seclusion in the court of a petty chief beyond our jurisdiction, where he has taken service.

"That daring and desperate reprobate, whose life I believe is forfeit here and in India, was the leader

in the attack on the Castle. She was aware of his presence in the neighbourhood. He with inconceivable audacity—from what I know of him, quite foreign to his character—actually made his way into my house and terrified the poor girl out of her senses, but she had the courage to resist his attempts to induce her to steal my keys. Her love for the wretch, induced her to screen him. He worked so on her feelings by his threats of violence, and by the picture he drew of his death on the gallows, that she kept his secret and the oath the rascal made her swear. When she fled from the room into which his band were breaking, she ran down the passage to the kitchen and was suddenly seized by her father and a man who forced the door you had been guarding. At that moment one of their scouts announced that the police were coming. Fraser put the poor girl on a horse and managed, as we know, to get clear off with her. Indeed, I know not what power we could have had to take her from him. Her attachment to such a worthless father is one of the singular points in her character, and it is only equalled by her dread of, and aversion to, Mrs. Brady. Fraser and your mother bitterly hate each other; it must be a hallucination of Miss Fraser that your mother was at Kil-

moyle, and that her father and mother-in-law were engaged in plots and counter-plots under the very walls of the Castle. When I go to India one of my first acts will be to bring pressure to bear on the fellow to surrender his daughter if she wishes to come ; and indeed, but for her sake and for yours, it would be my duty to call to account two persons who have committed such atrocious acts as the pair in question.

* * * * *

“ Yours with sincerity and regard,

“ DENIS DESMOND.”

When I received this letter, I sat down and penned a short reply, in which, without alluding to Sir Denis' remarks concerning my sentiments towards Miss Butler, I thanked him for his kindly expressions ; declining, however, most positively his proposed settlement of a rent-charge upon me, and assuring him of my humble regard and respect. By the same post I wrote to Mary Butler, and her answer came in due course. It ran thus :—

“ London, October 2, '54.

“ MY DEAR TERENCE,—Your kind and affectionate letter of congratulation was very welcome to me,

and I read part of it to my uncle, who seemed agreeably surprised by the exceeding pleasure you expressed. But he does not know the warmth of your heart as well as I do. Nor the strength of our friendship since we were children together, though so many years separated us till lately. And you have been so tender and watchful of Gerald. How can we ever show our sense of it? He writes only a few lines, and those not always very cheerful, but it is not to be expected that the poor wounded fellow could be very full of spirits. I was quite surprised not to hear you have met Miss Prendergast, or, as we ought to call her, Sister Rose, although she has not taken the veil. Her last letter informed us of her having gone to the East, to act as a nurse, and I almost envied, though I could not imitate her. There is a French army chaplain, a Père de Lancey, some relation of her family, out at Scutari, who will look after her. The dear girl seemed to think she wronged me some way, and was most anxious for an assurance of my forgiveness of a great wrong, which I must learn some day. As if she could commit a wrong towards me, or any human being! When you see her, give her my love, and tell her I am quite sure I may safely promise to forgive her any offence she can ever be

guilty of. And now, dear Terence, let me, in conclusion, beg of you to discard that gloomy view you take of yourself, and the world around you. Are you not very dear to us all, and have you not deserved our gratitude? My uncle speaks of you in the highest terms. He has influential friends, even if you needed any aid to your acknowledged merits, to aid you in your profession. We must all make some sacrifices in this world to our duty, as you and I well know. Ever since I was a child I have been almost a nurse or a dependent, and I have learnt to accept my lot. The society—the dances, the balls, and the little amusements in which girls delight, and in which I do not mean to say I should not have taken as much interest as others, have been denied to me. I have been shut up in a big house in London, with my aunt, her dogs, her cats, and her rheumatism, or taken out to dismal dinners, which I abhorred; or I have been carried off to watering places, where I was made a walkingstick. Then came my hurrying to and fro with poor dear uncle Richard, whose companions were seldom profitable or agreeable. My uncle Denis has done much to educate me. He has made me his confidante, his secretary, his woman of business, and his friend, and in all these capacities I have learned to know how

much he esteems you, and to respect him, in spite of his hardness. Reckon on us all—on me, dear Terence, and although I will not ask you to confide to me the cause of your sorrow, be assured of my deep sympathy and of my earnest desire and hope that it will soon, very soon, pass away. I feel how much you have had to embitter your days; and I pray to God that your last trial may have come now, and that you may enjoy many a year to come, in the consciousness that your happiness is dear to so many friends; and that among them, to none can it be dearer than to your oldest friend of all,

“MARY BUTLER.”

I could have accepted my fate more easily if it were not so manifest the writers of the warrants knew the blow would so pain me.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONFESSION.

SOME weeks' time after the city fell, I was ordered to go down to Scutari with a detail of wounded and sick. By day and by night wounded and sick were my companions. And now, as the best record of what happened, I shall take a few pages out of my diary, omitting trivial and unimportant details, and dealing only with the matters which affect my own story.

“ *October 21st, 1855.*—Deaths fourteen. *Orinoco* arrived, with sick and wounded. The new wards quite filled. The Sisters of Charity active, and I must say useful, though I should not like Blossom to know I thought so. I fancy I have seen one of them before; I must try to get a good look at her to-morrow. She turned away, and pulled down her veil, as I was attracted by a slight exclamation from her when I entered the ward.

“ *Oct. 22nd.*—The ways of Heaven are indeed

wonderful. Who would credit what happened last night if he read it in a novel? and yet it is true, every word. I was passing down the ward with Tice, my dear good chief, when the nurse at one of the beds touched me on the elbow, and said, ‘This case has been put into this ward by Dr. Janson, sir; but I thinks it’s a mistake. The case seems to me a dying, sir.’

“The nurse was not quite right—the man was apparently sinking fast—a bad wound suppurating, and a fever running to delirium, presented unfavourable symptoms. I gave him stimulants, and he opened his eyes. He called out all at once, ‘Miss Rose! O, Miss Rose, darlin’! Is that you?’ Turning in the direction of his gaze, there was my Sister of Charity, Rose Prendergast, standing behind me! I started to my feet, but she made no effort to unfold her hands, which were locked on her breast.

“‘Do you not know me?’ I exclaimed. ‘I, your brother’s friend, Terence Brady, whom you nursed not so long ago?’

“‘Yes!’ she replied; ‘I know you perfectly. I saw you yesterday, and no doubt I shall meet you again, for I am attached to this hospital. See, Dr. Brady, the man has fainted. It is Macarthy, from Lough-na-Carra, your own old place.’

“ ‘God bless Lough-na-Carra, and all that’s in it!’ moaned the soldier; ‘and the Virgin watch you, Miss Rose, darlin’, and all the saints of heaven! Ah! it was a drame, I suppose,’ he muttered, opening his eyes, and looking round his cot. Rose had, indeed vanished.

“ ‘It’s a drame, and a sign to me. And who are you, I wonder?’

“As he spoke there came on his face an ashy horror and fear beyond description; his eyes started, white, wide with terror! He crossed himself with trembling hands, ‘Oh! Holy Mother of God!’ he gasped, ‘have mercy! Have you come to take me in my sins?’

“ ‘My good man, compose yourself,’ I whispered. ‘I am the surgeon—Mr. Brady.’

“ ‘Yes, that’s the name—Terence Brady, of Lough-na-Carra. Ohone, and well I know—and well I know you; and it’s a sign and a token to me, as you stand there by my bed-side, that the mercy of Heaven will never be shown to my sinful soul—no, not even if you forgive me.’

“ ‘I forgive you what?’

“ ‘Whist! Don’t let them hear you. And don’t you know? Tell me, Mr. Terence, you’ll forgive me. You do know, and I’ll hope. I’ll hope, your

honour—though I've been a bad man, and have done you, oh, great wrong, sir.'

"There was in the tones of his trembling voice something which reminded me of one I had heard before; but I could not recognise his swarthy face, which now was agitated and clammy with terror.

" 'She's gone,' he said, looking round the room. 'She's gone, and I can aise my mind; but if she knew, she'd never forgive me it, though God knows 'twas not my doing. Listen to me, sir, for my time's coming near, and I must quiet my conscience before the priest comes. I'm better, I think, at the thought of confessing it all to you; but it's a wonderful thing to see you there sitting by my side in this strange place—I that was your enemy—and to have you looking after me, and watching by me; and Miss Rose not far off.'

"He crossed himself again, and muttered uneasily with closed eyes.

"I felt his pulse—it was feeble and quick, but there was no immediate danger. I was accustomed to the ravings of sick and wounded men, and but for his recognition of my name, and his agitation when he spoke to me, I should have paid little attention to what he said.

“The man by whose bed I stood was in a precarious state. His life was in the balance. Promising to return to him soon, and assuring him if he remained quiet and obeyed orders he would have a fair chance of recovering, I directed the orderly to look after him closely, and went through the wards in search of Rose Prendergast. None of her sisterhood, who were busy in their labours of love, knew her by that name, but at last I met her in a corridor. She spoke with great reluctance of our friends.

“‘It distracts us from our present duties to dwell on the outer world. Here is my world,’ she sighed, ‘I only live for one object.’

“‘And your brother?’ I inquired, ‘I am most anxious to know where he is, because I have a singular idea I saw him in the Crimea. The whole army knows of an Englishman with a scar on his face who is foremost in every attack on us. He was as near to me one night as you are now, and if I be right, blew up the magazine.’

“‘I declare I do not know whether poor Maurice is alive or dead now,’ answered Rose, ‘I have not heard from him for some time. But, alas! it may be as you say—he is out of his senses, and I have suffered from his violence—me, whom

he so dearly loves and yet abandons, as you see.'

" 'It were best, then, you never see him again, I think. It's hard to say so of my old friend, but he is beyond pity.'

" Rose said not a word. Her hands were crossed on her heart, on her left hand she wore a black glove.

" 'How long have you been here?' I went on—
'I wonder you did not write to me, for Auld Lang Syne sake?'

" 'I have been here several weeks now—six or seven; and before that I was at Buyukdereh.'

" 'At Buyukdereh! Did you see Gerald—I beg pardon, Major Desmond—there?'

" There was a slight quiver of her lip and eyelid and a faint flush on her cheek as she looked down and said, 'Yes! I did; I—I—attended him.'

" 'What a lucky thing to have a friend near him, poor fellow! Miss Butler never told me of that, though Gerald writes her word of everything.'

" 'Lucky, was it? I hope so, Mr. Brady! Major Desmond will be coming down soon, I suppose, now, won't he?'

" 'No, I think not until the army moves or goes into winter quarters, if we have to spend another

winter up there. Sir Denis is anxious that the marriage should take place before he goes to India, and I think it not unlikely he will come here with Miss Butler and have the wedding over soon. Major Desmond cannot hope to get home now, and cannot leave the service.'

" 'And you—how do you,' asked Rose, raising her eyes quickly to mine, 'like this marriage?'

" 'Whatever makes Miss Butler happy must always be welcome to me.'

" 'And do you really think Mary is much attached to her cousin?' said Rose, earnestly. 'Do you believe it would be a great shock to her if Gerald—like you, I must beg pardon, and say Major Desmond—finding he did not love her, broke off the marriage?'

" 'I have never speculated on the subject. The marriage has been for some time decided on, as Sir Denis is satisfied he can trust his niece's happiness to her cousin.'

" 'Surely there never could have been a doubt about Gerald's good qualities,' exclaimed Rose, warmly; then recovering herself, she continued—'at least as far as I know. And now as to Macarthy? I am very anxious about him. It was he who gave me the note which prevented the surprise planned by those desperate men, I handed you

that night. And his father was old Dan, whom you and Mary played tricks on long ago.'

" 'His case was critical,' I replied, 'and required watchfulness and nursing.'

" Rose undertook the charge of him. I found her at his bed-side always. Gradually the delirium passed away, the fever left him, and he gained strength.

" 'Macarthy wants to speak to you alone, sir,' said Rose, as I entered the ward one morning—she always addressed me so in the presence of others. 'He has something on his mind,' she whispered, 'and it will be a relief to him if you listen to what he has to say.'

" We were left together ; the beds in the ward were nearly empty. After a while he began the narrative I write as nearly as possible in his own words. He spoke slowly but clearly, closing his eyes and pausing from time to time :—

" It is some eight years, your honour, since I ran off from Kilmoyle and enlisted in the artillery that was at Athlone. I was a smart boy enough, but was fond of a dhrop ; and when we were sent out to Ingy I got worse and worse owing to the hate of the clim't, and it was nothing but cells and dhrills that I had, with the look-out of being flogged and turned out of the service. The bathry was

quartered at a place called Cawnpore ; on the Ganges it is, and it's a divel of a place for dust, which made the thirst the worse on me. There was a nice fat little ould native kep a sort of grog-shop in the Bazaar, where some of the bad lot used to go—the dhrinking blackguard fellows of the redgments in Cawnpore. Mohun Lall ; that was his name, and a good-nathered sort of man you'd think him, sure enough, for he'd let you run up a score, but when it got up to a month's pay or so you'd find the differ. One night just afore tattoo as we were lav-ing, says Mohun to me—for he spoke English—'Stay for a minit, I want to spake to you.'

"'Oh!' says I, 'I haven't it now about me, but by Japers, I'll pay you next week, or my name's not Pat Macarthy.'

"'Don't mind that,' says Mohun, with a nod. 'I want a word with you alone.' And when the others were gone, says he, 'Didn't I hear you talking to that horse-soger of Kilmoyle—that's in Ireland, eh?'

"'And where the devil else would it be?' axed I, and very surprised I was to hear ould Mohun knew where it was, for the natives is the ignorantest people ever you seen. But if I didn't stare when he up and axed me about Sir Richard Desmond of

the Castle and Doctor Brady of Lough-na-Carra, and of Mr. Terence; oh, faith! he had them all off pat—all the people in the country he knew. ‘Is it a witch, you are, Mohun?’ says I. ‘May be,’ says he, ‘I am.’ And then he gave me a lot of grog, and he axed me all sorts of questions about your honour, and what you were like, and so on, for I let him know I was Dan Macarthy’s second son that lived man and boy on ould Doctor Brady’s land at Coulbawn, and was fisherman to Lough-na-Carra. And when I was going, he says, ‘Be sure you come soon agin, for I want to talk to you.’ Bad luck to the day I ever clapped eyes on his black face and his black heart! When I got to barracks it was the ould story—I was late and dhrunk, and there was the cell at night and the orderly room in the morning, and the dhrills and stoppages in course, and it was some evenings afore I could get to the Bazaar again. Ould Mohun was glad to see me, indeed and he was, and guv me as much dhrink and more than I could carry. And there was the punishment worse nor before! And out I come again, and to Mohun’s agin, like a baste that I was, and got so dhrunk I couldn’t stir. When I woke up with my head splitting from the rakee, I was in a sort of loft smothered up with mats, and the hate like a turf

fire, and I could see the white spots of the sun on the wall. 'Lie quiet,' says ould Mohun, 'or you'll be tuk. The guard's been afther you, and you'll be taken for a deserter,' says he. I had been a day and night and part of next day lying there with no more life nor sinse in me than a stone. Wait awhile, your honour, and you'll see what's coming of this. When the night came Mohun says to me, 'If you mind yourself now, you may be a rich man. Come along wid me now, and I'll save you from flogging, and I'll forgive you all you owe me, and make your fortune if you do as you're told.' Oh, and it was the ideya of the lash that used to drive me mad with fear, and I knew it was coming, coming, coming, and when I thought of the bleeding backs and the scored flesh and the staring eyes of the boys I had seen get it, I made up my mind that as long as I could get a firelock or a bayonet a bit of their whipcord should never cut my live skin. The ould rascal made me strip and put on a native dress, and into a litter I gets, and he gets into another, and off we set through the town with a troop of bearers and a lantern in great state, for Mohun was a rich ould man, and, besides keeping the dhrink on the sly, sold all sorts of things and had great shops, and was what they call a Bunneah

as well. We jogged along till at last we got into a mighty quare sort of court-yard surrounded by high walls, and looking for all the world like a gaol. A doubt came over me for a minit, and I put my hand to my bayonet, but of course it wasn't there, and says I to myself, 'I'm done!' 'Now,' says Mohun, 'follow me, and come along;' and up he goes a staircase to a verandah, and walks along with me by his side. Except the barking of the dogs and the yooing of the jackals that does always lie about, I heard nothing at first; but as we were walking on the verandah, there was a sort of music, like the natives', going on somewhere; and indeed they never stops at it. Such music! Oh, holy Biddy! If Flannigan, the piper at Liscadill, heard it, he'd bust his pipes and die on the spot with disgust, so he would. But as I was saying, there was music and singing going on somewhere, and Mohun says, 'Wait here till I call you,' says he; and he shuffles off his slippers as they do when they're going into a room where there's greater people nor themselves, and went in at a door, and the music came out strong for a minnit till the door shut, and then it stopped altogether. I'm coming to the point, your honner, indeed, if you'll have patience with me. 'Come along,' says Mohun, at last, 'and mind how you

behave yourself, for you're going to see a great man entirely, and if ever you let a word pass your lips'—the ould blackguard drew his finger across his wrinkled ould throat, where he ought to have had a rope round it—'Go in,' says he; and he raises a curtain, pushes open the door! And, oh Mother of Mercy! If ever I saw such a sight! There was the beautifulest room ever you laid eyes on—a blazin' with candles and lamps on the walls and hanging down from the ceilings; and there was wherever you turned nothing but looking-glasses on the walls and gold frames; and there was scented rushes on the floors and patches of elegant carpets; and there was silver stools and chairs and tables, and a big table in the middle that was covered with gold and silver vessels and dishes and plates, and fruit and sweetmeats and wine; and there was a lot of little vessels burning beautiful smells out of them. Well, I was that stunned and speechless, I turned round for the door, but it was closed, and Mohun was gone. I couldn't see out of my eyes for the blaze there was, coming so sudden after the dark, and you may imagine how I hopped when I heard my name in a voice as if it was an angel was whispering, but quite plain, 'Macarthy,' says she, 'look up, and let me see your face.'

“The lady was seated on a sort of a sofa they call it, all covered with iligant stuff, but of all the things in the room there was nothing could compare with what I laid my eyes on. There was flowers on her head just resting on her hair, that was flowing all round her—oh, mulliaun! mulliaun! Such hair I never seen afore or since, nor anything that ever grew on a head—only a picture once I saw Father Tom had of a lady reading with a skull alongside of her, and she with mighty little clothes on her—no flax nor silk that ever was spun could match it; but when you saw the eyes she had, oh! Mr. Terence, if you seen her once you’d do her bidding you would, if you knew your life, ay, or your soul was lost the next minit. Don’t shake so, your honour. I’m telling you the truth. She was smoking an iligant little pipe, and I think her ladyship had taken some of the wine that was on the table, for her cheeks was a little rosy, which made her look all the lovelier, and when the smoke she puffed out cleared away and I found myself standing with my mouth wide open, the sweetest smile ever you seen came over her face. She was as bright as the sky in Heaven, with diamonds and all sorts of jewels, and there was a loose gound on her, and she wore breeches made of silver stuff, as the natives do, but

the lady was not a nigger, you may be sure of that. She was a little stout I thought, for her neck and arms was round and whiter than anything I ever saw.

“ ‘How old are you,’ says she, ‘Macarthy?’

“ ‘Going on twenty-one, your Royal Highness,’ says I.

“ ‘I’m not a Royal Highness, Macarthy,’ says she, with another smile. ‘Come over here, I want to speak to you.’

“ ‘Yes, your Majesty,’ says I, this time ; I crept over a pace or two with a thremble in my knees.

“ ‘Nor Majesty either,’ says she, ‘it’s not convenient to give me such names. You must not speak of me to any one till I give you leave. Come nearer still, and sit down there,’ she pointed to a silver stool not far off from her, and as I was sitting down something purred under the sofa, and I saw a pair of big eyes fixed on me. ‘Don’t be afeard,’ says her ladyship, ‘it wont hurt you,’ and she says something, and out slipt from under the sofa a panther, wagging its tail and catching up the carpet in its claws, and purring like fifty tom cats all at onst—and it lept up on the sofa and lay down at her feet, and put its great lump of a head with whiskers a foot long, on her lap, and kept its eyes

fixed on me all the time.' 'Do you spake Hindostance?' says she.

" 'No, your ladyship,' says I, 'only jist enough to ax for a bite and a sup.'

"She clapped her hands, and in walks from under a curtain an elegant-looking young gentleman in a turban and white dress, with a dagger all over diamonds stuck in the shawl round his waist.

" 'Azimoolah,' says her ladyship, and then talked low and quick to him in their lingo. He looked at me pretty sharp now and then, and listened to her, and they laughed together, I all the time wondering who she could be, and knowing its being against their religion to let a lady be seen with her face uncovered, I put it down she was some great English lady that was a little quare in her head, and that liked native habits, as some do. This Azimoolah was a handsome chap for a nigger—a copper-coloured lad, slim and straight, not very tall, but mighty supple as he moved, and he had a sharp look about him, and for all his fine clothes hadn't the air of a real gentleman; for they're some of them among the niggers as I've seen, and no finer-mannered men, though they spit about and has other nasty tricks. In comes an ould servant presently, and brings me wine, and her ladyship makes me

take it, though I swore to myself as I was coming along I'd stick to water for the rest of my life. She sends Azimoolah away ; and there, Mr. Terence, in a few minutes was this beautiful lady and myself sitting quite close together, so that I could feel her breath on my cheek, and presently she begins to talk of Lough-na-Carra and of the Desmonds of Kilmoyle, and she told me about the wrongs they done her—how she was a queen in Ingy, and was a lady in Ireland, and how the Desmonds had done her out of it all and drove her into hiding, but now she was going to be revenged and serve them all out. And then she goes on and says how she's persecuted here, and how she's enemies all about her, and wants a friend—brave, determined, and who would die at her bidding if need be—and says she, putting her hand on my shoulder, and looking—Oh, merciful Father!—right with her two eyes into mine.

“ ‘ Will you,’ says she, ‘ be that friend to me ?’

“ ‘ Ah, sir, how do I know what answer I made ? I only remember that she held to my lips the Cross of Christ, and that I said after her, word for word, an oath that damned my poor soul ! Oh, there was a cruel smile on her fair face when I had done, and she held me out her hand and let me—no, but

told me to kiss her fingers ; and rising, she went out of the room, with her baste of a panther purring by her side, and the curtain was raised up for her to pass. She turned and nodded to me twice or three times, and held her finger up, and went out from my sight, poor lost creature that I was ! Mohun came to tell me I was to remain in the palace, as it was called, and that I'd be well fed and paid, and after a time I'd be wanted to go back to Ireland to help the lady, who was, he said, once Rance or queen of some State, but I was to keep that quiet. I didn't see her for days again, and I wasn't let go out of the place ; but I didn't wish to be pounced on for a deserther, and anyway was on the watch for a sight of the Queen again. At last, one day I was sent for by Azimoolah, who said I must darken my face and go in a litter to the town, as the lady—Mem-Sahib—wanted me. I put on the most elegant suit of clothes ever you seen, and a nigger made me as black as himself ; and with chuprassees with drawn swords by my side and scarlet liveries, there I went as proud as a peacock towards Cawnpore. I began to think the Queen must be in love with me, and the only thing made me doubt it was that she hadn't sent for me before. I was tuk into a mean sort of a house by the back way, and was shown up-

stairs. There was the Queen, as I called her to myself, waiting for me, and when I went in she beckons me over to the window where she was—a native window, with a mat before it that you could see through without being seen. It looked out on the parade-ground, where the dhrills used to be in the morning and all the great sights took place, and there, sure enough, was my old bathry drawn up, and Captain Thunder, and that vagabone Serjeant Crick; and there was a British cavalry regiment, and a native regiment of horse; and there was a foot regiment of British, and another bathry. A great review it was, in honour of a mighty big civilian, as we call them in India—Mr. Desmond, a brother to Sir Richard of Kilmoyle, no less—that was coming through the place. There was a crowd of natives all round the lines.

“ ‘Now, Macarthy,’ says the lady, putting her hand on my shoulder quite familiar, but still so mighty stately and commanding, ‘you see the general out there with his staff? Well, he’ll come over here to this flag-staff close at hand by-and-by, when they’ve done their tomfoolery up and down the lines, as if the faces and backs of soldiers wasn’t always the same, and as if they ever looked at them, or could see as they’re galloping, if they did look,’

says she. ‘And there are two men that you must mark well, so that wherever and whenever you see either of them again you can know him as well as you know myself.’

“They came over, sure enough. There was the general, a fine ould man, with a red face, as most generals have in Ingy, and the staff officers, and on the right of the general there was a tall, good-looking man in a tight blue frock-coat and white trousers, with a low hat and a white puggree round it, on a fine horse. He had a great air with him, and all were paying attention to him, but he spoke only to the general. As he turned to talk I could see his face quite aisy, and so could the Queen; and if she had been a Queen I would not give much for the tall gentleman’s life, judging by the way she looked at him.

“‘Now,’ says she, pinching her fingers into my shoulder without her knowing it, ‘that’s one of them—that is Mr. Denis Desmond, Commissioner of Auripore; never forget him as long as you live. It is not easy to do so; once I could have——’

“She stopped, and looked at him; and I couldn’t help thinking her ladyship could be a very bad enemy if she was put to it.

“The march past was beginning. There was first

the Lancers, and then came the natives in powder-blue and silver—mighty fine to look at.

“‘Look well now at the man in front of that redgment.’

“The colonel was a tall, sickly-looking man, and wore a big black beard and moustache; he saluted with his sword as he came opposite the general, and Mr. Desmond gave him a kind of a nod as he passed, as much as to say, I know you, my man.

“‘You see him? Do you know what redgment that is?’

“‘I do not, my lady. It must have just come in.’

“‘It is Fraser’s Horse,’ says she, ‘and that’s Colonel Fraser that you are looking at. He is the other I want you to mark.’

“She said no more, but sat and looked till the review was over. Then the governor and the general and the staff, and all the civilians and the ladies in their habits, and a great lot of officers, came past our window with the escort. There was a fat pock-marked native prince in a carriage sated below us, that all the niggers were mighty civil to, and he had emeralds and diamonds enough on him to ransom a king, though he was a mean-looking fellow too. There was Azimoolah standing by his

carriage-door, and a crowd in scarlet liveries and gold, with swords, and all the rest of it.

“When the general and governor were just going past, the lady says to me, ‘Do you see them? Point me out Colonel Fraser.’

“‘There he is—next behind Mr. Desmond, off side.’

“‘Whisht!’ says she, and listened.

“There was the native, with his hands clasped together, saying something to Mr. Desmond, who reined up his horse and was hearkening to him quite haughty and contemptuous like. And when he answered, I saw the fat chap’s face grow yellow. Mr. Desmond didn’t say much, but whatever it was, it made all the niggers chatter; and then he gave his horse a touch of the spur, and cantered away with the general, and the officers and ladies laughing like anything, except Colonel Fraser, who said something to the prince, and followed after.

“To see the look the black fellow gave up to the window, and Azimoolah, too!

“‘Now you may go,’ says the lady. ‘Take care you’re not seen. I shall need you soon, and then will come your service and your reward.’ And the service came, sure enough. And I must shorten my story now I’ve told you how it was brought on

to me. This colonel Fraser that I saw was going to Ireland with his daughter, and I was to go aboard the same ship with him, and never lose sight of him. She feared this man, colonel as he was and fine gentleman, would do some mischief to her son by the first marriage—Mr. Terence Brady, and that is your honour's self I'm spaking to, no less—for reasons he had, as well as to spite her, for there was a hate between them that there's not the like of out of hell. 'Only for that girl,' the lady said, 'he should never leave Ingy alive.' And I believe her. So, as I knew you well—and many's the question she axed about you, and seemed to take on that you never wrote to her—I was to watch, above all things, over everything that passed, if he went near your honour, and to look after you. 'Mind your oath,' says she; 'and if a hair of his head is hurt, your life is the forfeit.' I had plenty of money; clothes and all were found for me; and I left Calcutta in the ship with the colonel and his daughter. He had with him a rascal that had been turned out of the service as a bad character, and a set of low natives. I kept as close to myself as I could; but I managed to give the young lady a little parcel her ladyship sent, and glad she was to open it, the poor thing, and hide it inside her bosom. She was very

fond of the colonel, I think ; but he was a terrible man for the cards ; and there was a lot of them did nothing but play mornin, noon, and night, and when he lost, which was often enough, his temper was beyond bounds. There was, as I said, a gang of black blackguards he was bringing over who were almost in a state of mutiny, as we'd call it, for want of their wages, which they were promised as soon as he embarked, and more than once he went in and knocked down their head man—as ugly a chap as ever I seen, he was—one of their pulwawns, or wrestlers—a square, active chap. He could have broken the colonel's back in a minute, and had a way of hitting a man with an iron that had a knob on it like the end of a poker, which he always carried, that no guard could meet—and that sent him down like an ox. But the pulwawn daren't touch the colonel on board. If you could see him though, when he was watching the colonel, you would guess what he felt. I made great friends with the natives, for I would spend my money on sweets and butter, and the likes of that for them ; but they were in the forecastle, and I was second-class, and Shorter watched me like a cat watching a mouse. That was the man the lady suspected, but the colonel and he never spoke a word while they were on

board ; but I could see Shorter was always on the watch when the young lady was on deck, and never let his eyes off her. Well, and it was a long voyage, but we came to London at last. I didn't know London, but I followed the colonel about like his shadow, and glad I was when he started for Dublin, and took up at Morrison's. For a week or more he kept very quiet ; but Shorter was always loitering about, and I had enough to do to keep out of his way. There was a public-house I used to go to, in a lane nigh hand, and as I spent my money freely, I was a favourite with the customers ; and at last I got in with a 'sheath,' as they called it, of the Sword boys, and took the engagement with them. One Slattery, a 'pothecary's boy, that had been, he said, in the American army, was one of our ' visitors.' We were all sworn to the Republic, and to drive the English Orangemen out of Ireland. They used to talk of you, and say Maurice Prendergast would gain you over ; and others said he wouldn't. All this while the colonel never went near you, but Shorter was finding out what you did, and where you went to. One night, who should come into the ' Harp' but Shorter himself ! He saw me at once, for I hadn't the beard on that I wore when I landed. Somehow he and Slattery was friends, and he was introduced.

to the Boys, and after a few sittings he took the oath as well. He and I got very thick, and I told him I had bought my discharge, and that I was aware he was a deserter, and that he was in my power. The colonel was getting in a bad way. He counted on having money from his relations, and he couldn't get a penny, and the heavier he played the more he lost. And, worse and worse, an ould Indian contractor that was over in England about some suit before the courts heard where Fraser was, and arrived in Dublin to ask for £2000 the colonel owed him, and swore he would prosecute him for forgery. It was coming near the time of the rising that was to be, and I could scarcely keep myself from grinning in their faces when I heard them talking of the pikes they had, and their pistols and vitriol bottles. 'The pike's the queen of weapons!' they used to say, the poor creatures! Why, a good bathry would be a match for all the pikes in Ireland, if it was properly handled and supported, and that *I* knew well enough at all events. Shorter took me into his confidence complete, and I promised to help him and the pulwawn; but I never could get hold of a scrap of writing or any evidence agin him. He was an awful villain, sir. He let out that the colonel wished you put out of the way, and that he was willing to do

the job. 'But then,' says he, 'it's not his money I'll want—it's that nate little daughter I'll have as well, and I'd like to see him refuse me when I've done his work.' This was the very thing I wanted to know; and I believe, clever as Shorter was, I done him from the outset. We bought a fast, light-pulling second-hand gig, and kept it in an old shed at a place called Ringsend, and at night we would dodge about the river or run over to Clontarf opposite, when there was a meeting of some of the Sword boys at Mr. Prendergast's, or elsewhere, and wait for orders. One morning, Shorter calls on my lodgings and says, 'Come along—we'll be wanted to-night, may be.' And off we goes to the College, and we walks in as if we were strangers, which we were indeed, and saunters about; and by and by in walks the colonel to the square, and goes up a stair. We roved up and down, looking about us by the way till he came down, and then Shorter walks past the door-way with me, and says—

"'You see that name, T. Brady? He has paid the visit, and I'll hear what's to be done when I go back, by and by, but you must see the man in order that there will be no mistake.' I never let on I knew your honour at all to him. We waited till you came down, and crossed the court, and then

Shorter pointed you out to me. That night we met at the Harp, and Shorter said that Rustum, the ould Indian Contractor, was going to a meeting of the Sword boys, at Mr. Prendergast's. They thought it was an Indian prince, no less, in Dublin, and one of Mr. Maurice's friends thought it would be a great stroke to enlist him, the poor little baste. 'And we must finish him,' says Shorter. 'I've told Ali to be at the boat-house.' And then he explained that we were to knock him on the head if we had a chance, carry him on board, and drop him over, with a stone or shot to his neck, in deep water. 'It will be a hundred pounds a piece, that it will.' It was a hard night—thunder and lightning—as we pulled over. We beached the boat, and put over a grapnel for fear of accidents, and took up our post near Mr. Maurice's house. It was a long watch, and we had to move away at times, for a policeman came by more than once, and there were some cars waiting for the people inside. At last, sure enough, out comes Rustum, not able to stand. But he was safe from us for all that. There was a covered car at the door, and a couple of young fellows put him in and got alongside of him, and off they drove, leaving us staring at each other. I thought we were going back to the boat, but says Shorter, with an oath,

‘No! as we’re out on business, let us try our luck. If anyone comes by that isn’t a Sword boy let us see what he’s got about him. No flinching, my lads.’ The pulwawn alone said ‘I don’t want to rob.’ Well, presently you came out and stood at the door, and I saw you quite plain, but Shorter had been drinking and couldn’t make you out. You came right over towards us, and Shorter gave you the word. I hoped you would maybe give the right answer; anyway, in case it came to the worst, I was determined to shoot Shorter or the pulwawn, whoever was first upon you, and I kept my finger ready and watched them, but you fairly gave us the slip, and were off like a deer. ‘It’s that Brady!’ exclaimed Shorter, ‘the best luck of all! He’s worth five hundred pounds to us.’ We gave chase. I was always a pretty good runner, but I could not go so fast as the pulwawn, nor could he cover the ground in the style you did. Oh, it was well you had sinew and muscle in your long legs that night! Shorter, drunk and stout, soon gave in. I could see the pulwawn gaining on you. Again you put on steam and shot ahead, and I strained my best to get near enough to save your life. Once or twice I was near trying a shot on chance at Ali, but feared I might miss

him and hit you. I was failing fast as we reached the bridge, and when I gained the top you were both far in front of me. I kept on as well as I could. I could scarce see, but I heard the tramp of feet, the sound of a car, and then a police rattle, then all was silent. I halted and listened. There was the noise of a man running towards me in a minnit, that made me jump. It was Ali. 'To the boat!' says he. 'There's two there!'

"He pointed back with his finger, struck two blows in the air with his iron, which whistled like a sword blade.

"'Mr. Brady! You villain,' says I, 'if you've touched him——'

"'No. Not touch him—police wallah,' says Ali, 'Don't you hear? They've found them. Run!'

"We gained the boat, picking up Shorter on the way, who was furious with brandy. There was a bottle of spirits in the boat, and, as we pushed off, we passed it round, but the pulwawn would not drink; it was well he did not, for we never could have reached the Shed only for him. We all three slept in the boat till morning. You know what news we heard when we woke. Well, sir, it was considered we ought to keep quiet, and it was not till I returned to India I heard from Ali how he had

taken his revenge. 'It was a chance I could not lose. As the young Salub leaped on the car, the Colonel, who beat me like a dog, stood just within reach of my arm. I felled him; the police wallah, who was following, saw it, and tried to stop me, but I felled him too. My arm was weak, or they would never have spoken again.' That's what Ali said."

"Did Colonel Fraser employ Shorter to murder me? Do you mean to say, Macarthy, that Shorter told you so?" I asked slowly—with a stern resolve. I awaited his reply. "Answer me truly."

"I can't say, sir. Shorter was to watch you, and that night, though I doubt if he knew you were there at first, he did not care what he did."

"And where is Colonel Fraser now?"

"I don't know, sir, and that's the truth. The pulwawn got over to Liverpool, where he shipped for India. I met him in Cawnpore afterwards. Shorter got a situation, by a character the colonel gave him, in a house in Scotland, where the plate-chest grew so light he could carry it away with him. The Lady was very bitter on me when she heard I had not gone after the colonel. She cut off the money very sudden, and I was put to hard courses for livin'. But I got an order from her to go back

to Ingy and money for my passage, and this time it was Lucknow she was in. Narrow escapes I had of being tuk up, and glad I was, after I had been hidin' a few months, when I got the word from the Lady to be off to Ireland once more. I was to go to Kilmoyle, and to report all the goings on in the Castle, and to observe Miss Fraser, who my Lady was mighty fond of, and then I was to have a pension. Sir Denis had tuk her out of regard for old times, and the Lady was overjoyed because she was away from her father. But he was wanting to get her back, and the only thing prevented him was the Lady swore she'd have him handed up to the Government out of the place he was hidin' in. Well, your honour, I tuk to the drink again when I come back, and got in with the Sword boys of Kilmoyle, or them that was the same—And indeed there was plenty of them, for the place was the miserablest in Ireland, and Sir Denis, with his new-fangled ways, didn't mend matters. There was hopes of a great war agen England. Mr. Maurice, who had been wandering in Amerikey and in the Ayste, came back; but even his sister there, the darlin', didn't know it then. You may judge of the surprise I had one night, as we were at a Council-Chamber of State in the back-parlour of Driscoll's shebeen, when

in walked Colonel Fraser and Shorter! They had the forms all regular and proper, and the Colonel took the chair, and all went on very pleasant as they were planning the best way of attacking the Castle, no less, till Mr. Maurice arrived.

“ ‘Money is the sinews of war,’ says the Colonel; ‘and that tyrant has untold gold in his coffers; he has arms too, and if we strike a blow under the very nose of the army that’s just arrived it will be a great effect and strengthen the cause.’

“Mr. Maurice was clean against it; he said attacks on houses was no good, and the like. Mr. Maurice only cared for the ladies, I believe, or for one of them, at all events. I stood by him through thick and thin. But the Colonel, who went by the name of General Charles, carried the meeting clear against him; and the committee arranged it all for next night. When he found you were to be in the Castle that night, Mr. Maurice sent you warning, at all risks; I was bound by my duty to the Lady to help you, but you were near spoiling all our plans, your honour, by not coming to us. You know the rest, sir, and the fire, and how it all ended. Glory be to God for it! Amin!”

“Where was General Charles that night?”

“He was with the boys indeed, and it was he

led them on. His heart and Shorter's was set on getting his daughter into his hands, and on having Sir Denis's money ; he had horses ready to carry her off, depending on her not wishing to say a word to get him into trouble. But as sure as you are sitting there, sir, if he's alive this minute, the Lady has beat him."

"The Lady ?—where was she when the attack took place ?"

"Oh, in Ireland, no less, and not far off ayther ! You may open your eyes, sir, as I did mine, but what will you say when I tell you she came to Kilmoyle ? She came over hot foot after the General ; he never suspected it, but there she was living in the ould man's cottage at Coolbaun ! And at night she would walk about like a sperrit, and make me take her to the Castle grounds, and look out for Miss Fraser, or Miss Mary, or Sir Denis at the windows. She seen you the day the redgment marched in, and says she, quite to herself, 'What a fine fellow he is !' says she, 'very like his father.' And she seen Sir Denis and the young ladies in the carriage, and called Miss Mary a 'doll-faced beauty'—Lord forgive her !—and got in a rage when Captain Gerald began talking and Miss Mab hung down her head. And oh, if she wasn't in a rage when they told her

of the attack, and how Miss Mab was gone, and that you had a blow on your head. When she heard you were well enough to go about agin the Lady went off with herself in a great hurry, for she had bad accounts from India. She gave me money, enough, God knows ; but I was as I am and always will be, and I had to take to the old trade ; and here I am now, where I'm like to be not very long. You should have got that letter sooner—sooner, sir. Indeed you should.”

* * * * *

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECRET MARRIAGE.

I NEED not dwell on the feelings which the story of the soldier Macarthy excited. There were many things explained by it which had been previously matters of doubt. But that my mother should have been at Kilmoyle—that Fraser should have become a burglar and a thief, a rebel and a murderer, passed belief! They were bitter enemies, but that he should desire to take my life for no other purpose than to inflict a wound on her, supposing she loved or cared for me, was incredible. And if Macarthy told the truth, she suspected Fraser of a design upon me which would most probably, if carried out, bring upon him an ignominious end, and which seemed to be opposed to the interests he might have in view and the use he might make of me in causing her annoyance. Macarthy was quite sure she had never seen Fraser at Kilmoyle, and that she did not know of his presence

till after the attack had taken place and Mabel had been carried off. All he told me went to show the unhappy woman possessed some trace of natural affection. Was I not now loth to recognise it in one whose heart was the abode of such evil passions? She hated the wretch who had been the partner of her crimes. She hated Sir Denis with an intensity quite devilish; in that Fraser and she were agreed. And yet they both place themselves within reach of a man who had every advantage on his side, and expose themselves to almost certain detection! True, they had escaped. But what were the chances against them when they came to a strange country—they, marked in manners and speech, ignorant of all around them—and trusted perforce their secret to many accomplices whose position laid them open to temptation? It could not be that Maurice Prendergast exerted his influence to cause the secret to be preserved, for he it was who warned me against the plot to rob and murder the inmates of the Castle, which no doubt was Fraser's conception? Maurice must be lost indeed if he became privy to such atrocious crimes; as yet it was plain he had done nothing to aid in bringing the criminals to justice, when a few lines of an anonymous letter would have caused

their apprehension. What my miserable mother's motives in coming to Kilmoyle were it was not possible to fathom. Brooding over the matter, I felt just a ray of hope that something of the human being, of the woman, was yet left in her breast, that her son's voice and entreaties might soften her heart and induce her to end her days in peace and penitence. I did not care to inquire into the causes of Macarthy's entreaties for forgiveness. He was her poor ignorant emissary, and I feared to come on a confession of an intended villany which would destroy my hopes and put out the feeble spark which was left still burning in token of my once ardent love.

In a few weeks after my arrival at Scutari I was ordered back to the Crimea. Among the letters which awaited me was one from Standish, written in ignorance of my absence at Scutari, and asking me to come to his quarters when I had leisure. It was some days after the assault of September 8th and the occupation of the south side. Another of a later date was accompanied by a note from a surgeon, my Gallipoli acquaintance, Hugh Callaghan, to beg of me to come quickly.

"I urged Mr. Standish to go home or seek change of air when these symptoms first appeared, but he

persisted in remaining here, and I cannot conceal my apprehensions that if he does so, &c."

I galloped over to the little hut, and when a husky voice said, "Come in," I was shocked at the change; Standish was ill indeed. He sat at his little desk writing. His wasted hand, his thin cheek, the hectic flush on his face, and the bright glaze of his eye, told the tale—he was in great danger and the winter was killing him.

I implored him to return home at once; at least to leave the camp till the weather became milder.

But he was calmly obstinate.

"It cannot be, my dear friend," he replied to my renewed entreaties. "This is my post. I am a soldier of the pen, and here I am on guard—

"Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deemed——'"

here I stick, nevertheless; and if death comes he shall find me with my pen and my note-book in my hand. I have no urgent private affairs to attend to which could be improved by my going home; and the little woman and the bairns will be better by my dying than by my living, though I wouldn't tell her so. Of course I should like to see *her* again and to look on *their* innocent faces, but if I am to go, the plea-

sure would be dearly purchased by her pain. As old Isaac Walton says, 'every misery I miss is a new blessing.' We have both been behind the scenes, Terence! You have seen the work of war, and I have learned to know how heroes are made, and can tell how far the feathers and harness go. And we must both do our duty like any warrior of them all, and face the conqueror if he comes, though neither honour nor praise await our memories, content with—

“One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas.”

And in that faith, and in the better faith which concerns itself not with mortal praise, he died.

Whilst diplomatists and congresses were protocolling and treaty making the months passed with leaden wings on the plateau, and men went on obstinately dying. Gerald Desmond, who on his return from the Bosphorus had been sent to Kertch, received another wound in a skirmish with the Russian cavalry. It was not dangerous, but it rendered him unfit for duty. He was obliged to leave Kertch, and lie up in the Sanitarium. I saw him as often as my duties in hospital would permit—oftener indeed than he seemed inclined to receive me. His wound did not heal kindly,

but he refused to go down to Scutari. Once when I reminded him of his approaching marriage, he answered with something of his old contemptuous manner, which reddened my cheek with anger, What business was it of mine?—What, indeed? The diplomatists and congresses came to an understanding at last, and whilst they were dressing their articles, we were amusing ourselves with blowing up the Russian docks; the French were practising with bombs and rockets on the opposite side of the harbour, and the enemy were preparing for what never took place. Another campaign. As the war was over our army was in capital condition for war. But Mouravieff was on the other side, and——

“Oh dear, and oh dear, your honour,” demanded my faithful Malony, “an’ is it thrue what they tell me, that the peace has broken out on us?”

“Yes, Malony. It is quite certain. We must evacuate this as soon as possible.”

“Is it lave it, your honour?” inquired Malony, with an incredulous face—“lave *this* place we’re in this minnit?”

“Certainly. We’ve destroyed the south side, and we must surrender the ground to the owners.”

“Eyah? An’ it’s myself can’t understand what

the divil ever we come for thin! That's a purty peace to come and rob us this way."

With the peace came also the near approach of the event for which I had been "case-hardening" my heart for many a month. The "Peace had broken out" upon me also. My regiment was about to leave for Malta *en route* to the Cape, but I could not evade the cruel kindness that insisted on my being present at the sacrifice.

It was to be our last week in Balaclava. I rose early, and went about my duties in the hospital. The sea was dotted with white-sailed ships, and the sky was streaked with the smoke of the steamers, bearing away east and west, north and south, the fragments of the host which had so long peopled the plateau and the now woodless glades around. I clambered from the toiling crowd on the quay to my little hut, perched among the crags crowned by the old Genoese forts, which frown on the waves hundreds of feet below, and watch the narrow entrance of the fiord. By the way there is a patch of ground, studded with wooden crosses and a few stone pillars and tablets fenced in by a wall of turf from the encroaching vines. I entered by the little wicket. A woman, dressed in deep mourning, was kneeling before a marble slab, clearing away the weeds from the

flowers which had sprung up luxuriantly, and two little children by her side, silently and wonderingly regarded her, as the tears stole down her cheeks.

“Don’t cry so, mamma! We will pluck the flowers for you; wont we, Stapley, dear?”

And the little maiden, raising her eyes, caught sight of me and exclaimed, “Oh, mamma! here is the dear young doctor! He will soon cure you, and bring back papa to us.”

On the slab before which the widow knelt was inscribed:

“In memory of Staples Standish, of the Inner Temple, who died in the Camp before Sebastopol on 1st January, 1856, aged 27 years.

“‘Here feel we but the penalty of Adam.’”

It was my last duty to poor Standish to erect that humble memorial.

The words beneath were almost the last he spoke.

I led the widow forth and her little ones.

“Your husband was my first friend, when I cast myself adrift on the world, dear madam; if you and your children need my humble help, depend on me as long as I live. The good lady nurse will be leaving to-morrow; and she will be at my hut in a few minutes to make arrangements for your voyage home. These sad weeks have done your health much injury; remember you have his children to look after.”

And when I was alone I prayed for the fortitude I so much needed: *my* bitter trial was to come.

I dressed myself with care in my old uniform, tried a cheerful smile for effect before my triangular piece of looking-glass, which may have reflected an uglier countenance in the Russian villa whence it was taken—not by me—and set forth on my way back to the harbour. It was a wonderful scene to look down upon!—the decks, swarming with soldiers and sailors; the strings of carts and mules and horses on the quays, the long lines of horsemen and footmen streaming away to and from the plateau, and tapering off into mere specks of colour on the hills; on the ear came the hum of voices, and a confused sound of rolling shot and empty barrels, and trundling barrows, and creaking blocks, the sailors’ “heave away!” and choruses as they swung on board the cargoes. Near the mouth of the harbour lay the *Anaxandrown*, John Window, Esq., C.B., Captain. A snow-white canopy covered her quarter-deck, and dingier canvases protected her crew from the blistering sun. A new ensign drooped from her peak, every spar was squared to a line, and every rope drawn strict, “like mathematics,” as my hospital sergeant would say. Her white streak has been repainted, and altogether the *Anaxandrown* looked

like what she was, a smart ship with a smart captain. As I make my way down the zigzag path, startling the fat little quails among the vines, a gun shakes the old wall, and the echoes roll thundering away along the cliffs, awakening familiar sounds which have been silent for weeks past. It is a signal to a small steamer with French colours, heading directly for the crowded harbour, to lie-to outside till the senior naval officer shall permit her to enter. There is an animated conversation in flags between the Frenchman out at sea, which seems to be a Government despatch boat, and the signalmen at the tower, in which I take not the smallest interest. Very much astonished indeed should I have been to be told that these bits of coloured bunting going up and down had a most important bearing on my destiny for life. But so it was.

I got into the boat which was awaiting me, and as the Maltese pulled under the stern of the *Anaxandrown*, there was Jack Window in full dress—epaulettes, white waistcoat, broad red riband, and all, shaking his telescope at me over the taffrail.

“Mind, don’t be late, you terrible Irish medicine-man! we’re all waiting for your Major, and there will be no fun till he comes. There goes Brady, Sir Denis, for his patient. We must clear decks.”

And Sir Denis popped his head over the bulwark and waved his hand to me!—there was just a flash of something white in the stern window, like a handkerchief, as the boat whisked in between cables and hawsers, stems and sterns, and pulled for the opposite landing-place.

Gerald Desmond, in full dress, was waiting to receive me at the Sanitarium. He was seated on a bench in the shade in such deep thought he did not notice me till my shadow fell across the ground at his feet.

“Hallo!” he said, “is that you, Terence? What a hurry you are in!”

“We shall be late, Desmond. It’s to take place at eleven o’clock, you know, and it’s now past ten o’clock—a quarter, by *Anaxandrown* time. Come along.”

“I feel so deuced unwell,” he sighed, “I wish they could put it off. But no—what must be done must be done. Give me your arm then, and here goes.”

His leg was yet a little painful, and he leant heavily on me, as we made our way to the quay. He sighed again.

“Are you in pain?”

“Eh?—oh no! At least that is—I’m not quite

myself—I slept badly. Don't you think it is odd,"—he stopped to speak,—“that Sir Denis is in such an infernal hurry? It's scarcely delicate—why couldn't he wait till I got back to England? 'Pon my soul it's not in good taste, to say the least of it.”

“You ought to be the happiest man on God's earth, Desmond. But one thing I'm quite sure of, a word from you to her would very soon procure you a reprieve.”

“Who talks of a reprieve, sir? By Heaven, Mr. Brady, you must take care of what you say. I thought I could speak to you without having my words twisted—you think I ought to be the happiest man in the world—oh! I daresay you do—I'm very much obliged to you for the homage you pay my future wife—very, sir! But keep the expression of it to yourself—I beg of you.”

Gerald Desmond was shaking with passion, and his face was by no means that of a joyous bridegroom. Although I was stung by his sudden attack, I mastered my feelings (I had learnt the lesson in a hard school) and was silent, whilst he, no longer leaning on my arm, walked with the aid of his stick down towards the quay, where a boat from the *Anaxandrown* was lying. “I've a d——d great mind,” he muttered, “to put the

whole thing off for a month—for a year if I like—for ever. Whose dog am I that I must be hunted up here and taken almost out of an hospital ward to be a bridegroom, and to marry a lady who doesn't care two straws——”

“Oh, Gerald! oh! for God's sake, Major Desmond, don't say so!—respect yourself—reflect——”

“I know what I say—that old fellow there knows well he can cut me off, and I dare not refuse. My cousin is an angel, if you will. But Terence, I swear to you she is too much of an angel for my taste—cold as that rock—never has a word of love for me escaped her lips! If I were well even——”

“Major Desmond,” I said, “it is only twenty minutes to eleven o'clock. They are waving to us from the boat. If you like, I will go on board and tell them that you are too ill; Sir Denis and Miss Butler will, no doubt, come up to the Sanitarium at once to see you.”

He made no remark, but hobbled stiffly on, and I, fully satisfied there was some cause at work to set him thus beside himself, in sore perplexity of mind, and in great grief and distress for her, walked alongside him, to give him my arm in case he stumbled. Something whispered to me, that as I valued her

peace, I ought to tell her, if not Sir Denis, what I thought. But I suspected my own motives, and scouted the suggestion. And here is the man who, in a few moments, would stand by the side of Mary Butler, and in the eye of Heaven vow to love her!

“Beg your pardon, sir,” said the coxswain, touching his hat, “but the captain says you are to come aboard at once. The General’s aboard already, and the ladies and the Chaplain. Wherever is that darned Frenchman acoming to? Fend off there! bow!”

The boat passed just under the cutwater of the small French vessel which I had noticed outside, now forging ahead towards the quay.

At the gangway stood Captain Jack, Sir Denis, General Crookencre, Mr. Bates, Major Turnbull, and a few of Gerald’s friends, in a great knot of congratulation and expectancy. We passed between the folds of two silk standards, which were stretched curtain-wise so as to screen the quarter-deck, which was covered in at top. Lady Crookencre, Lady Blossom, and the admiral’s wife, were prepared for any amount of crying and sympathizing; the Rev. Egon Eden, stoutest of ecclesiastical Adonises, who had been practising poses before the extempore altar, was quite ready to begin.

“How pale Major Desmond looks!—why, you haven’t made half a job of him,” whispered Captain Jack. “But if he were dying, he ought to be made well at once by such a wife.”

Sir Boldero Crookencre, a withered courteous warrior, was struck by the pallor of his *ci-devant* aide-de-camp, and looked reproachfully at me, as though I were to blame for it. Old Turnbull, whose eyebrows and moustache had become quite black, and whose ringlets were glossy as the raven’s wing (and of the same purplish hue), poked Gerald in the ribs, and swore he was the saddest dog he ever saw waiting for the noose. Dear old Bates, leaning on my arm, silently watched the uneasy bridegroom, who walked towards the ladies, grouped round the Rev. Eden, as if to escape the good-humoured bantering of Colonel Silliman, his best man, of Bob Williams, and of the other accessorial personages who were in the high spirits considered desirable on such occasions on the part of all outsiders.

Sir Denis appeared on deck with Mary Butler on his arm. She walked forth from her little crypt below in a simple white dress, and a white rose in her hair, more lovely in her grand simplicity, in my eyes at least, than any finery could make her. As her

eyes met mine, she held out her hand to me with her own smile, not quite so radiant I thought as I had seen it in days gone by. I scarcely ventured to hold it for an instant, and it was gone—gone for ever. And in a moment more the words which rang out as the knell of all my hopes—my death sentence began.

The Rev. Egon read the service as though he were quite satisfied that he was the bridegroom, and made the most out of every word, looking round to mark the effect of his attitudes and elocution on his auditory.

But he paused suddenly, for there was a loud sound of voices on the deck outside the flags.

“You can’t go in, sir,” said the marine outside the curtain; “you must wait.”

“I tell you I must—I must see Sir Denis Desmond,” responded a voice in a foreign accent.

We turned towards the screen; Jack Window strode angrily towards the scene of the altercation, Gerald Desmond clutched the altar, with a look of agony, as a man with the sentry’s grasp upon his collar burst through the opening, exclaiming—

“I must see the Commandant Desmond. Oh, Messieurs, God be praised! We are yet in time to prevent a great outrage!”

He was dressed as a Catholic priest, and on his breast was the star of the Legion of Honour. His look was fixed on Gerald.

“ Ah, Monsieur Gerald ! Heaven is very good to thee.”

And shaking off the grasp of the doubting marine, he advanced towards the altar. Jack Window drew himself up, and raised his hand to bar his progress.

“ May I ask, sir,” he demanded, “ why you force my sentry and intrude yourself on board my ship ? You understand English, and decency too, I hope. If you have any business with me, or any one on board here, you must withdraw, sir, till the proper time comes.”

Gerald Desmond’s lips were white, his eyes closed, as if to shut out some horrid sight.

“ Capitaine,” continued the priest, “ I understand English a little, and decency I hope more. Business, too, I have here on board ; it is not difficult to say what it is. I am chaplain of the Brigade Jollivet, of the Second Army Corps ; my name is De Lancey. I hear that the Commandant Gerald Desmond is going to marry himself to his cousin, Mademoiselle Butler, niece of Sir Denis Desmond ; I am here to forbid that act, and to prohibit a grand crime.”

“ You, sir? By what right, and why?” asked Sir Denis. “ How dare you?”

“ Ah, sir, I dare do what it is right to do. Come here, my child, and justify me.”

“ Do you know this priest, Gerald?” asked Sir Denis. “ What does this mean, sir?”

The priest opened the curtain, and there stood before us, wan and sad, Rose Prendergast!

“ Oh, Gerald! darling Gerald!” she cried, “ how could you wrong dear Mary so, and me? Mary, my own loved Mary, forgive, oh, forgive me! I am Gerald’s wife.”

“ Yes, the Commandant Desmond’s wife, gentlemen!” repeated the priest. “ It was not of my wish, but I performed the ceremony. I have here the certificates.”

Sir Denis drew Mary’s arm within his own; the little gathering around the altar stood mute; the reverend Adonis closed his book. Jack Window, as he faced the priest, with legs wide apart, held his hand aloft to restrain the marines at the entrance, and with orbs wonderfully dilated, stared from one to another all round.

“ And is what this gentleman says true, Gerald?” Sir Denis said, softly, but with a terrible wrath on his face. “ Are you married to that girl, and have

you ventured to commit a crime like this? Sir! it is incredible.—Look up, and answer me. Why don't you speak?—Gentlemen, I beg you to withdraw for a little.—Thank you, my dear Bates, thank you.”

Rose Prendergast had fallen at Gerald's feet; but the priest raised her up, and now drooping on his arm, she stood with her gaze fixed on Gerald.

“Uncle,” he gasped, “I am very bad—but not so bad as you think. I am free to marry cousin Mary. Yes, Rose,” he turned to her with an air of despair—“yes, confess. It was, you know, not a legal marriage. You are a Catholic, and you knew I was a Protestant, and yet you would—Oh, God! have mercy!—Terence! Terence! look to her. My Rose! my sweet, dear love! I was but jesting.”

For as he spoke, Rose broke from her uncle, threw up her arms, and with a horrid laugh fell on the deck with clenched hands, as though she had been thrust through the heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DAWN OF HOPE.

THE scene I have related passed in a few seconds. It altered the destinies of many lives. Sir Denis Desmond summoned all his pride to conceal the wound inflicted upon the only living creature for whom he felt a warm affection. And Mary? Well, she neither fainted nor burst into tears, but burying her face in her uncle's neck, as if to hide from her sight the miserable face of Gerald, so stood till the bitter cry of the heart-broken girl reached her. Then she forgot and forgave all, and clasped the inanimate form in her arms. But Sir Denis drew her firmly away. Though softened by Rose's anguish he was implacable to Gerald.

The *Anaxandrown* sailed next night for Malta, but Mary Butler, ere she left, had raised up the broken reed and given hope where all had been black despair. She interceded, as only such a

woman could, with her uncle for the man who would have done her the greatest wrong. He tried at first, miserable wretch, to cover one baseness by another, and denied the validity of his marriage. But in vain, Mary touched his heart with remorse, and when she had won the victory there, she sought the injured wife. How she overcame one by one all the distracted girl's remonstrances, dissipated her jealousy, and softened her just indignation!

"It must have made the angels in Heaven bless her, sir! It must indeed," said Père de Lancey, tapping his snuff-box. "She was so happy when she reconciled my poor Rose to that wretched creature, and made her forgive him!"

I returned to the ship to bid Sir Denis adieu. He was in his cabin, and, when I entered, I saw the marks of tears on that iron face. Mary rose from the stool on which she had been sitting, with her head resting on his knees and her eyes appealing to him as he wrote.

"And where will your regiment go to from the Cape?"

"To India, Sir Denis, I believe. But I hope to manage to visit you before the time comes. I long to see India."

"I understand—Well, you will find me at Auri-pore, I hope. You will, I hope, write regularly, and Mary or I will answer you."

Mary repeated, "You will write regularly." Then her grave face grew bright for a moment. "Your regiment will go out to India! We shall see you again! That, Terence, is a pleasure I at least shall look forward to with great joyfulness! It will remove much of the sorrow which ought to attend the parting of such old friends. Wont it, dear uncle?"

"And besides," remarked Sir Denis, rather testily, "we are not going to part yet at all, for we shall meet in Malta ere I sail for India."

But that was not to be. The regiment was detained longer than we expected. The transports were slow, and when we reached Valetta the packet for Alexandria, in which were Sir Denis and Mary, had been gone some days. Mrs. Desmond was my fellow-passenger. She was ill and suffering, and I attended her. By degrees there grew up between us an intimacy which led to friendship. I ventured one evening to speak to her of the marriage which had been broken off just in time by her arrival in Balaclava.

"The hand of Heaven was in it," observed Mrs.

Desmond. "Mary would have been unhappy had Gerald married her, for she did not love him."

"How do you know? Not love him!"

"Did she not tell me so? She said to me, 'It would have been a marriage by order on both sides, dear Rose, believe me. Gerald dared not refuse to marry when his uncle ordered it, for he depended on him altogether. He was in debt—he feared the anger of such an unforgiving man as my uncle—he dared not reveal his secret marriage to you. And as for myself, Rose, I declare to you, I never felt any love for Gerald. But uncle Denis prepared me to regard him as my future husband. And so we were both of us going to be married without caring for each other, and when each of us in fact was in love with somebody else.'"

"Mary said so!"

"Yes! she did, indeed. And very seriously too."

"And did you, dear Mrs. Desmond, did you ask her who it was?"—I could say no more.

"Yes, indeed I did! I asked her, 'Who are you in love with, Mary darling?' But Mary only smiled, and said, 'That is a secret, Rose, like your marriage at the little chapel. It's an old flame, and I don't intend he shall ever know it.'"

And then I asked Rose Desmond if she could guess who it was.

"Yes!" she replied, "I am sure, Mr. Brady, Mary Butler likes you."

I went away at once, in a violent fit of passion. Rose was trifling with me! Then I returned to her side. I almost wore out her patience asking her to repeat what Mary said, and how she looked when she spoke. I pressed her a thousand times to tell me why she thought Mary cared for me. Rose could give me no *reason* for her belief. "But she was quite sure of it from Mary's manner." She observed her eyes sparkle when good news came about me. When I was insensible at Lough-na-Carra, Mary was very anxious and unhappy, and almost forgot Miss Fraser's disappearance for a time. How I treasured up now the memory of every word of Rose Desmond's confidences—every look—every syllable of Mary's words ere she left! I distracted myself by twisting them into every variety of expression, but the result was I dared not believe. I was too great a coward to risk the precious freight on so frail a bark.

Nor was Rose happy. Desmond was fond of her, and proud of her grace and beauty; but she could not shut her eyes to his weakness. The ruin of

his prospects affected her deeply, and to a haughty nature like Gerald's it was a sharp trial to fall so low in the eyes of all his friends.

"I would be happy with him in a cabin, but what can I give him in exchange but my devotion?" sobbed Rose one day. "And what is that to one like him, who has been in the grand world, and who has lost all for me? It is not to be wondered at if at times he feels how foolish he has been. But oh, I wish he would not let me see it, for it is very hard for me to bear. I am so glad we are going to some place where I can be always with him. I had no right to marry him and make him a beggar—no right to expose him to danger; I will never let him out of my sight, and at least I can die for him. Love made him forget everything for me."

"How can your marrying Major Desmond have exposed him to danger?"

"Oh, I fear my brother Maurice. Father de Lancey let him know that Gerald tried to make out our marriage was not binding. His anger exceeded all bounds; he wrote me the cruellest, bitterest letters. Unhappy Maurice! Wherever he can strike a blow against England, there, he says, he will go till he can lift his arm no more."

We were to leave Malta at last, and then came

the hour for another parting. Bates and Turnbull waited till the day drew nigh. They were astonished at the change in my looks and spirits.

“And now, dear Terence, good-bye for ever. Vale, vale, longumque vale !”

It was my good guardian who spoke, the old, dry man of law, and, though tears diminish as our sorrows increase, and as we need their solace the more, his eyes were dropping tears. We sat, hand in hand, on the parapet of an old battery; Major Turnbull, in the highest style of old English gentleman—gaiters, and grey pants, tight cut-away coat, and double bandana of tremendous depth, and curly-brimmed hat—stood a little apart.

“My dear, dear old guardian! You will live, please God, to welcome me back, if not to see me happy. In four or five years more at most I shall return, please God, and you must meet and welcome me.”

“Ah, my boy! in five years I would be ten years older than the time assigned for mortal life by Him who made us. I shall not be one of the exceptions to prove the rule. But Turnbull will. He shall be my residuary legatee, and shall inherit the right to welcome you, my lad, and he will discharge it as a labour of love, I know. He gets

younger every day, though I'm sure he's near eighty this minute. There must be something in wigs and dye-stuff, after all. The fellows who use them desire to live long, and succeed by mere force of volition. Only it's too late, I'd try now. But, Terence, to talk as men ought to do who, in all human probability, will never meet again, particularly as they should do where one is the family lawyer—let us consider the situation. You have 200*l.* a year clear, as a rent-charge on Kilbiddy and Kilbride—that's good as long as land is land in Ireland, unless there are no people left to pay rents at all. Lough-na-Carra is gone; but you have the money from the courts to bring in 150*l.* a year in the three per cents.; Coolbawn will add about 180*l.* more, and then there's 200*l.* from Moy—over 700*l.* a year in all—not a bad income for a bachelor. It is a great question, then,—and I wanted to come to this—why you should not give up the army altogether. You have won credit and a good name. If you like to practise, you can; or you can settle down at Coolbawn when the house is repaired; or you can do nothing, though I don't think you would like the business. Leave before the regiment goes to the Cape, I advise you. Why should you go out to India at all? You run your head into the

lion's—that is, the tigress's mouth, and expose yourself to her tricks, and to fever, cholera, cobras, Fraser—and all kinds of dangers.”

“ Dear Mr. Bates, do not dissuade me—my mind is made up. I will sail with the regiment next week at every risk. I feel that there is a little regard for me lingering in her heart. If I could only see her, I might save her ! I would take her away from that poisoned atmosphere. You shake your head. But I am assured she does not quite forget me; and face to face I may persuade her. Fraser and she have broken for ever. If ever I meet *him*, let him beware; but I promise you I will not trouble myself to search him out.”

“ India is a large place ! ”

“ Yes ! But Sir Denis will help me. I can get leave, I will not leave a corner of it untried, as long as I have health. And it would be uncandid towards you if I did not confess there is another motive. It may be a miserable comfort, but it will still be some consolation to be under the same sky as Mary Butler.”

“ I tell you, Terence, Sir Denis will never hear of it. He likes you, but he hates your family and your name. He would never consent to your union with his niece, supposing Miss Butler regarded you

with a stronger feeling than friendship. And why, after all that has passed, should you think so?"

"Sir Denis loves his niece, Mr. Bates, and I am satisfied he would not sacrifice her happiness to his own prejudices. I do not mean to say she loves me, but I am not without hope. When we parted she expressed such pleasure at my coming to India."

"What less could she say? Words of mere civility to an old friend and kinsman, who had been with her in such trouble! My dear Terry, don't build your hopes on words such as these."

"But, Mr. Bates, there was something about her so changed towards me. Her look—her manner! I almost venture to think, from that and from what Mrs. Desmond told me, Mary is not quite indifferent to me."

"Then it's a great mistake for her not to say so. She must know how you feel towards her."

"But if she did she could not encourage me, when she knew Sir Denis had set his heart on her marriage with Gerald. Besides I never ventured to breathe a word to her of my love. Whenever I wrote, I struck out every syllable which seemed too affectionate. I watched over my feelings closely, and I scarcely ventured to speak lately when I was in her presence."

“ You were a very odd pair of lovers, I’m thinking. But it’s just as well ; Sir Denis would never hear of it. I have heard him say often there has been a curse over his house ever since your ancestor married a Desmond. And he is set on getting a great match for Mary. It was only for family reasons he desired Gerald there to marry her. A pretty kettle of fish *he* has made of it ! He went through every penny of his father’s money before he left the Guards, and Sir Denis had to pay a good lump for him besides. Gerald Desmond will not have the value of a pinch of snuff beyond the paltry annuity when the old man goes.”

The French mail steamer next day was steaming away to Marseilles, and my eyes were straining to catch the forms of Bates and Major Turnbull, who vanished at last, waving their hats and handkerchiefs towards the parapet on which I mounted. Gerald Desmond and his wife went in the same ship, for he had been appointed to a *depôt* at home.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PROMISED LAND AT LAST.

THIS British army! Wandering, Ulysses-like—for ever wandering—from place to place. Circe and her Syrens here—Scylla and Charybdis there—while pale Penelope, Britannia, sits at home, reads the newspapers, and pares the estimates! Here is a land where fevers grow; there is one famous for vomito. This is a garrison sacred to ennui; there is another where man must live by brandy, and die by it. Here is a gay capital where the mess-bills are heavy—where balls, drags, pic-nics, theatricals, are necessities, and “bill-transactions” lead to the grave of “selling out.” *Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena doloris?*

Mr. Webster spoke once of the tap of the British drum which follows the course of the rising sun round the world—a fine image. But to the British subaltern the reality is dreary enough. He stands sentinel on every shore, gazing towards home, over

the sad sea-wave. In Indian wastes—amid American snows—on African sands—on ocean-beaten rocks in European seas, he paces to and fro, and thinks of the *Gazette*, of duns, of Miss Bellona or Mrs. Mars, vowing he will send in his papers; and with the most peaceable intentions in the world, burning for the chance of another war, with anybody in particular—perhaps, in spite of or in consequence of the *entente cordiale*, and from old habit's sake—the French for choice. And Providence is very good to him. If there is not always a great European war going on, there is sure to be a little savage one—a Persian—a Chinese—an Affghan expedition—a Caffre campaign—a New Zealand guerilla; or there is some tribe to be punished in India, and such places as Sitana and Bhotan rise to the top for a moment, and having figured in the votes largely and in the gazettes slightly, go down again.

The Bengal Tigers, full of spirits, are now on their way to China, where we are going to “protect commerce” and ensure the fulfilment of treaties, and inflict a Christian chastisement on the barbarians who do not respect the rights of foreigners in a strange land. The old soldiers, sunburnt, gnarled fellows who have had nothing but hard

knocks in the Crimea, burn for more profitable victories, and hail the prospect of sacking a temple or a town with delight ; and the young soldiers, eager for adventure and ambitious of stripes and medals, are animated with equal enthusiasm. To me our destination brought unalloyed disappointment. The main object of my life was to visit the land where all my hopes and fears centred, and had I known of the change in time I would have left the service. But it was too late. How little consequence it seems to the world whether it is the 1st regiment or the 2nd regiment which goes to the Isle of Dogs ! What enormous results the route entails on many a man for life ! The Quartermaster-General breaks more hearts, ruins more plans, and brings about and knocks off more marriages than all the cupids, bill-discounters, and match-makers in Great Britain and Ireland together. There is Jack Wilmot, our senior Major, gnawing the ends of his moustache as he thinks that by the very next ship will be landed at the Cape the disconsolate lady he had left in Brighton after a short married life of two months. There is Brevet-Major Nash, beside himself with delight at the idea of his escape from Miss Vanderdouch, or rather from her terrible mamma and the two great Dutch boors of brothers who have called

him to account for his marked attentions at the Governor's ball.

"It was all that filthy Cape champagne. I told the old girl so, but she wouldn't have it. I believe she would have fastened me for life to that tremendous Cape sheep only for this beneficent idea of sending us to China. Long life to the Horse Guards, and death to the mandarins, and Dutch widows with big sons and daughters!"

The *Triton* was taking it easy over the long roll which was all that remained of the effects of a strong breeze that had rattled us along for some days past. Captain Tadger, a compact, tight little mariner, with his lips wide apart, was taking a sight at the sun through a very ancient sextant on the quarter-deck. Mr. Brittles, chief officer, a loose, long gentleman, with oiled black locks, patent leather boots and snow-white jacket, was occupied in the same way with an instrument spick and span in polished brass and ebony. "Have you got it, Mr. Brittles?"

"Yes, Captain Tadger!"

"What do you make it?"

"It's 74° 10' 30"."

"That's nigh what I've got. All right, Mr. Brittles."

And Captain Tadger and Mr. Brittles, each at-

tended by a myrmidon with a slate, retire to their cabins to work out their reckonings, and several young gentlemen who have been craning their necks to bring down the luminary to his proper level, go off on similar errands.

"I never can understand how the deuce they do it," observed Lieutenant Groby to Ensign Stubbs, with an air which implied he considered the whole proceeding very futile.

"Not exactly. But I know it's by trigonometry, Gro."

"Oh! by trigonometry, is it? Then I suppose it's all right. Eight bells gone! come down to lunch." And then when Captain Tadger reappeared, there was a general questioning, to which Tadger responded by a reference to Mr. Brittles, then and there affixing a paper to the saloon door.

"A hundred and heaty-three miles since yesterday, that's what we've done."

"And where are we now, captain?"

"We're about heateen miles southerd of Point de Galle, in the Highland of Ceylon. We must stand hoff a little more, or we'll be getting near them Basses' rocks—ugly customers, I can tell you. I was near lost my first voyage in the *Ross-shire*, on them Basses, as ever was."

“The *Ross-shire*! Were you on board then?” asked I. “Do you remember a Mrs. Brady—a passenger?”

“Don’t I, just, doctor! I was an apprentice, about fifteen years old, at the time. Wasn’t she a stunner, I can tell you! Mrs. Brady was a beauty, and no mistake. When she walked on deck, now and then, in her widdy’s cap, all hands used to slope aft to get a good look at her, and proud she used to be of it—such eyes as she had and hair—not all the widdy’s caps that ever was crimped would hold it, I can tell you. I beg pardon, doctor! Was the lady related to you any ways?”

“She was, Captain Tadger.”

“She was, was she? Well now, I’ll tell you a most ’stron’ry thing—the night we struck—and I do believe the old *Ross-shire* was one of the few as ever tried that game on and didn’t lose at it—one of the old sort, she was—they don’t build none of ’em now-a-days—the women gets all huddled up on the poop, and a sea comes aboard and washes some of ’em over—Mrs. Brady, and some soldiers’ wives, and a native nurse with a European child—of course *they* never came aboard again. Well, doctor, surely we all thought they was lost. There was a little boy belonging to her on board, and when we put into Ceylon, an Indian officer, one Captain

Fraser, that was in charge of her, and was paying her great attention, sends away all the natives, except the man nurse, and packs off the little chap and the servant to Ireland. More than a year after that, I fell in with one of the hands that had been aboard the *Ross-shire*; we had a glass together, and he let out that Mrs. Brady wasn't aboard the *Ross-shire* when she struck. She was up to some dodge or other, you see; and she gives this chap and another a couple of sovereigns to hold their tongues, and what does she do, but slip out of the ship when we put into Madras Roads, and lands there dressed like an ayah—and the poor sergeant's wife took her place in the cabin, and pretended to be so sick she couldn't stir. It was she was carried over the side, you see, and not Mrs. Brady at all. Well, Captain Fraser, I heard, married her in India. But anyway if he did she's got another name now. For here's what bothered me. Some years ago there came a lady aboard us at Bombay—a Mrs. Allayne she called herself. She kept very much to herself, and had her servants to take in her meals; but one day she comes up on deck for a bit of fresh air—and she sits down in her chair and begins running her beads like a Papist or a native. It struck me I'd seen the face before, dan the

more I looked the surer I was ; for though years had passed, no one could mistake her—unless there were two of the handsomest creatures God ever made as like as two peas. So I goes up, and bows to her politely, and after a word or two about how we were getting on, I says, ‘ It’s a good many years since I seen you now, ma’m.’ ‘ Indeed ?’ says she, very haughty ; ‘ and where was that ? I’ve never been out of India before—I was born there.’ ‘ You were at sea though, before, if I’m not mistaken, ma’m,’ says I, ‘ in the old *Ross-shire* when you was Mrs. Brady.’ ‘ Mrs. what ?’ says she. ‘ Mrs. Brady,’ says I. ‘ Captain Tadger,’ she says, looking me full in the face, and just a trifle angry, ‘ how old are you ?’ I told her, taking off a year or two, as we do over the forties. ‘ Then,’ says she, ‘ Captain Tadger, you’ll never be a wise man, I fear—you’ve lost your memory, or you’ve got a new one—it matters little to me. But remember if we’re to be friends,’ she adds, holding out her hand and laughing—‘ that my name is Allayne, and that you never saw me before ;’ and down she goes to her cabin, and leaves me in doubt whether I’m on my head or my heels.”

“ Where,” I enquired, “ were you bound for, Captain Tadger ?”

“ For the port of Liverpool from Bombay, and

the lady, whoever she was, cleared right out from the custom-house, and took a passage to Dublin by the steamer, for my second officer saw after her traps and put them on board. And if that wasn't Mrs. Brady, I'm a Dutchman!" added Captain Tadger, and truth to say, he might have been a Hollander if they are like the type of the race popularly known in England.

"Captain Tadger," reported Mr. Brittles, "there is a man-of-war steamer in the nor'-east signalling to us. She has fired a gun and shows British colours. Looks to me like a gun-boat."

Captain Tadger hastened on deck, and I followed him. All the officers who had glasses to spare were inspecting the stranger, who was coming down as fast as he could steam.

"I can make 'em out, sir! Seven, eight, six, three, one. That's her number."

The signal boy repeated, "seven, eight, six, three, one. Royal Navy. *Hannah Conder*."

"The *Anaconda*, is it?" said Mr. Brittles. "Tender to *Walrus*, flag-ship of Admiral Sir John Window, K.C.B., commanding the station. What can she want?"

That we soon found out, as the transport was brought to, for the *Anaconda* coming up on our

quarter, lowered a boat, and a naval officer in great haste appeared on board.

“I have despatches for the senior officer in charge of the troops on board this transport—very fortunate to find you we are. There’s bad news for you, gentlemen.”

The senior officer was Wilmot, and, as he opened and read the despatch, his face darkened. “There need be no secret about this,” said he, gravely. “No China for us this time. The Bengal army is in open mutiny. They are murdering their officers—the people have risen, and have massacred men, women, and children, at several large stations. My orders are to proceed at once to Calcutta, with the troops under my orders—and we shall have nobler work in saving an empire than in fighting the Chinese.”

The officer brought no papers, or news of any kind, except vague rumours. The *Anaconda*, with several swift vessels, had been detached to intercept the ships on their way to China, and the admiral only knew of the events which had occurred by the brief contents of his despatches.

And Mary was in the midst of it all! There was only one consolation, but it was a great one. I would be near her. A horrible event had altered our

course, but I welcomed it indeed, for now we were on our way to my "promised land."

Captain Tadger, after observations of a general character, on the risks incurred by him as to insurances, underwriters and the like, proceeded, under friendly compulsion, to lay the course of the *Triton* for India.

"Do you see that 'ere surf, far away, just under the loom of the land?" quoth he, that evening. "That's them Basses I was a speaking of—that's the very spot where the *Ross-shire* had such a squeak of it, more than twenty years ago."

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ ’TIS RANK REBELLION.”

How slowly the *Triton* cleaves its way! Blow, wind! blow, gale! O let us hasten on! They were all thinking of revenge, and of saving an empire. I could only fix my thoughts on one little object. She might be in danger, and an hour might save her. Another cruiser stopped the ship off Madras. The news she brought made each man's cheek turn pale, and filled him with feelings too strong for words. God knows there was enough of atrocity in that mutiny and insurrection to justify much vengeance! But how many lives have the ignorant or terrified scribblers to answer for, who filled the press with hideous inventions, and drove our soldiers wild with fury and passion? There was no need for monstrous fabrication. Cawnpore, Futchghur, Jhansi, and Delhi, were quite enough in all their horrors. A morbid appetite for the horrible and the cruel seized on the public, which nigh

destroyed the tone of the national mind and the reputation of the country, in spite of the glory won in scenes more trying than any set battle-field.

The Bengal Tigers looked over the bulwarks at the low cloud-like shore on our left, with an ominous glare in their eyes. Each man felt that he had to avenge nameless cruelties, and to punish a race guilty of unheard-of barbarities. My soul sickened within me. I dared not let my mind dwell on what I read. My eye wandered in vain over the columns of the papers for any news of Sir Denis Desmond. He was at Auripore when last I heard from him ; but that was many many weeks ago ; and in that letter he expressed his satisfaction at the results of his policy :—

“ There have been ridiculous apprehensions created in Bengal,” he added, “ by the conduct of some few mutinous sepoys ; but the Bengal army has long been in an unsatisfactory state, owing to the cowardice of the Government ; and I am not prepared to say the troubles will prove to be altogether so ludicrous as they now are, if the authorities do not make the most signal examples of the fellows at once. The contagion will spread, although I do not fear its extension to Auripore. Here everything is quiet ; the people are reconciled to our rule, and I

trust I shall soon root out the fakirs, and other agents of mischief who infest the bazaars, and are always hostile to a settled, resolute Government, which represses mendicancy, and endeavours to educate the people. I am opposed to any Government proselytizing, but I am equally adverse to the domination of the native priests."

There was no news from the west of Cawnpore. Scraps of letters without date—telegrams written in wild excitement—ravings of correspondents—mad demands for the instant execution of acts and persons quite beyond reach—no news of Auripore!

What passionate longing for action! what a fever in my veins to burst the bonds of the watery prison, and be free to act! And what joy, one early morning, as we glided up the Hooghly, to see the spires of Calcutta in the distance, and the forest of masts at Garden Reach!

The sergeant-major came aft and touched his cap.

"I don't know whether you're aware of it, sir; but there's a number of the enemy on the beach. We could knock a lot of them over from where we are now. It isn't above six hundred yards, I should say, major."

Wilmot smiled. "Why, sergeant-major, I thought

you knew India ; you were here before. They are coolies at work on the landings and poor fishermen—no enemies of ours, you know.”

“ I beg your pardon, major,” responded the bluff sergeant-major. “ My idea was we were to open fire the moment we saw any of the natives, as I’ve been reading in the papers they’re all our enemies to a man.”

And he retired, discomfited, to a council of war of the sergeants, who were in a knot discussing political news and measures, as taught by the Indian press, ere the morning parade.

India at last ! The land where I was born, and where my father’s bones are lying—where my darling is in the midst of dangers and horrors indescribable—and is it thus I see you, after all my longings and my hopes ?

And instead of immediate action there came the most maddening delay. We could not move up at once. The country was in arms. The capital must be protected. The force at hand was small. Pale Calcutta trembled for itself. At night the inhabitants cowered on board the ships in the river. By day they inveighed against the only man whose calm courage they could not understand, and whose imperturbable justice they stigmatized as timidity.

I was told off for hospital duty. I hope my patients were not sufferers, but I am quite sure I did not understand very much of their cases. I thought at times of running off bodily, and trying to make my way up country. But the utter wildness of such a scheme was too apparent. I set to work to learn Hindostanee; and I toiled at it night and day whilst the weary hours passed at Fort William.

There was news at last from Auripore—"good news," they said. Sir Denis Desmond was indeed shut up in the place; but he had a stout garrison and the Rajah of Tangree was collecting a force to attack the besiegers, who had marched from a neighbouring station after firing the bungalows and murdering their officers.

I at once waited on the Governor's aide-de-camp, whom I knew. He repeated all I have just told you. "And the women?" I asked. "What of them? There were women in Auripore?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Captain Grierson. "The commissioner's daughter, for instance, and half-a-dozen officials' wives, and more—we are not quite sure how many. Sir Denis, in a dispatch dated some weeks ago, when matters were looking serious, informed his Excellency that he was about to send away all the women to Palka under a small escort;

that was just before the investment of Auripore. He added that his daughter was most anxious to stay, but that he did not consider it would be prudent. If he sent off the escort at the time he named, his Excellency fears they may have fallen into the hands of the Goreepore mutineers. God bless me, doctor! you look ill. Shall I get you some wine?"

"No! don't mind. It's only the heat. But if you could help me to get up country with any force going to Auripore, you would confer on me the very deepest obligation."

"Well, for the sake of old times, I'll see what can be done. I'll let you know if we hear anything new. Good bye."

Like a criminal reprieved at the gallows'-foot, and told to wander where he pleases, I received an order one morning from the P.M.O. "to march to-morrow at four A.M. in medical charge of a detachment to Buttra in Azimghur, and to report myself on arrival to Deputy Inspector-General Galusha Growl."

The days were intensely hot, the dust insufferable; but my only thought was that every march would bring me nearer to her. An agonizing telegram was for ever before me—"We shall be able to hold out in case all stand to us for ten weeks

more. Women and children under escort for Agra ; only one stays with——” And then the dispatch broke off—the wire was cut.

And what marches they were ! The burnt bungalows, the ruined stations, blackened walls and chimneys ; no human creature visible, but hanging on the trees by the road-side, festering in the sun, were—— And the hideous array of gorged vultures, and the wheeling crowds of loathsome buzzards and foul birds, whose prey is the flesh of the dead ! At intervals along the road we met parties of sick under escort or officers with dispatches.

“ Any news of Auripore ? ”

“ No—nothing certain. The Bazaar report at Cawnpore is the garrison had to give in, and were murdered. But those who know the Commissioner Desmond, and Colonel Tickler who commands, don’t give the smallest credit to it.”

We reached Buttra, but the field-force was broken up into flying columns, and scouring the country all around in search of bands of rebels, who were showing more than usual enterprise and conduct.

Galusha Growl, notwithstanding his name, was a kind-hearted, obliging man, with a turn for sentiment, and decided gifts in the way of eating and drinking.

“Sir,” he replied to me, lifting his head from a huge tankard of commissariat beer, to which he had given a head by dusting it profusely with carbonate of soda from a pepper-castor, and wiping his moustache with a broad, brown fist, “it’s quite true; you’re no use here. It’s just like my chief to send you. I see no reason why you should not join General Potter’s column, which is as likely to go to Auripore as not, as soon as we hear the Bilelee rebels are cleared off the road on his flank, and Sir Colin is about doing that very soon. There’s already Dr. MacBride, a countryman of yours, with Dobson’s horse and the Punjaubees, but there’s plenty of work for all the surgeons, and you can join them as soon as we get a chance. I don’t wonder at you wishing to give a hand to the gallant fellows at Auripore—Heaven help them!”

I could not eat, nor drink, nor sleep—my very reason was shaken—for three weary days and nights longer must I wait. This was indeed to be in the furnace—to feel the blood boiling and mark the body wasting—to look into the glass at an awful face with blood-shot eyes and fevered cheek.

But once more a reprieve came. Dr. Growl sent me word one night that I could get off with a

Lieutenant of Dobson's Horse, who had come in with dispatches and was returning at dawn with his handful of troopers to join Potter's column.

We were riding over an open plain dotted with clumps of trees and fields of pulse, but not a creature could be made out as we swept it with our glasses.

"This is very different work from your Russian campaign, Doctor Brady!" said my young companion. "There you had civilized enemies. Here we have savages to deal with; they never spare us!"

"And do you spare them?"

"The niggers? Oh! certainly not; just shoot them like dogs, as they are, whenever we come across them."

"Well! that balances accounts between nigger and Christian pretty evenly."

All day long the heat had been increasing as we pressed on to our rendezvous. The sultry eventide was more trying than the fervid midday: the blasts of hot air becoming more violent and frequent, presaged the advent of the thunderstorm already muttering in the east, and blackening the horizon with clouds barred by incessant streaks of lightning.

The native troopers were uneasy, and cast glances in every direction.

"They have made out fresh elephant-tracks, which must belong to the enemy," explained the officer. "You can see them and horse-hoofs too, all over the ground, in the very direction we are going! They must be making right for Gumwarra, where Dobson was to be; and if so, they will have a treat. But *I* don't envy them. We must look out not to be pounced on by the runaways. Ho—there is something up. What is it, Jemadar?"

The grey-bearded Sikh was screening his eyes with one hand and looking towards the west; the other hand was held aloft, as when a keeper "soho's" to a point of his dogs on a grouse mountain.

"It is a body of cavalry. There is much dust, sir, and it advances rapidly!"

Every horseman, standing erect in his stirrups, gazed anxiously.

"Can you see elephants, Sahib?" asked the Jemadar of Lieutenant Eustace, who had dismounted and was steadying his glass against a lance. "They will be seen first of all, for they are black and thick and high."

"It's all right, Jemadar," replied Eustace, leaping gaily into the saddle, "our own lads, thank heaven! It will shorten our ride by a good many

miles. Now we can march quietly and save our horses.”

The dust-cloud drew near to a clump of trees, spread out thinly, and by degrees settled down so that we could see the men had dismounted, and were picketing their horses. As we approached a couple of officers and a sowar galloped out to meet us.

They were both young men; one, Colonel Dobson, tall, gaunt, and solemn looking, beetle-browed, swarthy, with black eyes, and thick beard and moustache. The other, a bright blue-eyed, cheery-looking lad. Their heads were covered with conical helmets, terminating in a metal spike, and swathed with a red shawl. The tunic of dust-coloured cotton cloth, ornamented with worsted braid on the neck, breast, and cuffs, was provided with steel shoulder-straps, and chains attached outside, which afforded defence against sword-cuts from the wrist to the neck. Each wore the yellowish leather boots, used by horsemen in India, coming over the knee, and gauntlets of light mail, nearly reaching to the upper part of the forearm. Sabres, in plain heavy sheaths, slung from their baldrics, and pistols stuck in waist-belts, gave the wearers somewhat the air of *condottieri*, and conveyed an impression very unlike

that which one has generally of British officers in the reign of Victoria.

“What news, Eustace?”

“None, Colonel, except what may be in these dispatches. What have you for us?”

“Nothing much—a hunt after a swarm of scoundrels who managed to escape us. They were encamped under the very tope where we are now, and they must have had a scrimmage with some of our people, for we have picked up a wounded man. It’s beastly work. We never *can* catch them.”

Three tents, and a shed of canvass, constituted the only cover for the force.

“I fear we shall get it with a vengeance,” said Eustace. “I hope Beecher has something to eat for us. If it’s heavy rain we cannot move till the sun has been out, for the country will be too heavy for the horses.”

He raised the curtain of the tent—a fine mat of small bamboo fibres, through which one can see into the light.

“Hallo, Eustace! I’m just ready for you. You are in time to escape the ducking that’s in store for outsiders to-night,” called out a pleasant voice, the owner of which was engaged in slicing cucumbers into a large plated goblet. A lamp lighted

up the interior of the tent, which was pitched as carefully as if the inmates were going to live there a week instead of a few hours. The table was covered with a white cloth and glasses, and two or three servants dived in and out under the curtain at the other end with dishes in their hands. Portable camp chairs were placed by the side of the table. From the tent-poles were slung telescopes, flasks, and pistols. The ground was covered with an Indian carpet.

“ You must rough it to-night, gentlemen. The beer is rather queer—no time to cool it—the *abdar* is *non est*—lots of our traps not come up yet. But Mahomed says the soup will not be bad. The last village has furnished us with lots of poultry. There’s a good curry, and some gun-bullock steaks. That’s our *carte*. But, if Colonel Dobson will go after impalpable abstractions called the rebel army, and gallop away from our stores, your messman can’t help it, can he ?”

“ We’ll do well enough, Beecher, if there’s plenty of beer and a drop of Exshaw,” said the Colonel. “ I confess to a leetle thirst after this particularly fine warm day, and the agreeable exercise we’ve had. Thirty-five miles, if it’s a yard. A few sore backs, I suspect, and some sore-footed people outside.”

“I suppose if this storm is as bad as it looks we shall not start in the morning?” inquired Eustace, who was of a Sybarite turn. “I wish, if it is going to rain, that it would come down at once, in order that a fellow may know his fate.”

“Faith, and I can tell you, mee boy, if there’s any value in signs and tokens, your doubts will soon be set at rest,” said a man, with a rich round voice, who appeared in the fold of the curtain.

He was middle-aged, short, and corpulent. The strict observance of the uniform regulations of his corps did not detract from the unbellicose and peaceful bourgeois look of his round, sleek figure, and broad, honest, clean-shaven face, which was warmed into a purple glow by an agency far hotter than that of the sun. He had an exaggerated spike to his helmet, an extra thick turban around it; his belts, boots, spurs, baldric, and cummerbund were all on a grandiose if not gigantic scale; but, instead of swords and pistols, Doctor MacBride was hung round with instrument cases, a telescope, and a flask or two. There was neither chain on his arms nor gauntlet on his hand; and, in spite of his odd appearance, there was no greater talker, no greater grumbler, no harder rider, no harder drinker, no man softer-hearted

always, or more composed in time of danger than the doctor of Dobson's Horse.

The Doctor's lamentations were interrupted by the introduction of my humble self, and of my dispatches from my P. M. O. He read them, turned up his eyes, and exclaimed, "That's the way Growl sends lambs to the slaughter. But you're welcome, Mr. Brady; and we'll do what we can for you. Go on with your dinner. It's not likely you'll get many as good, or as much time to eat it in. Here am I, after riding as if I was Dick Turpin ten times over, with just the same risk of life and limb in case of a scrimmage, without the chance of a word in the dispatch of our friend here, who would have the honour to report that the Doctor, by his attention, &c. &c., gave every proof of zeal and satisfaction: here am I, when all my work is over, obliged to go on with the extras; and, as if I had not enough of my own, there's a job picked up for me at the end of my day from Heaven knows where, and a native lady adds herself to the list. Yes, thank you, Beecher, a little more curry! Beershrab lao!"

"But about your patients?" inquired the Colonel. "What of our countryman—is he a soldier or a civilian, or what?"

"Well indeed, and if you listened to the non-

sense he's talking you'd think he was the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief himself. He's very near being one of the army of martyrs ; he's got a bad fever, is weak from loss of blood, and poor food (the wing, if you please) ; then he's a broken arm, and a bad cut on the head, a nasty thrust in the body—not to speak of a few incisions of all sorts. He is snug enough in the joss-house, and I've left my coloured brother with him for the present."

"Can you make out who he is?"

"Make out? Oh, I can make out plenty. He's a Crimayan hero by his talk, and he's going on about the Redan too, and Sebastopole, mixed up with Delhi and Lucknow. And—there, you won't tell—I've found out one thing that's against him, he's Irish—mere Irish—'pon my honour." The dish of baked earth, with balls of prepared charcoal, was brought in and placed on the table, and each man lighted his cigar.

"A fine stout fellow, too!" the Doctor proceeded. "The arm I set was a picture. I don't know if I'll not have to take it off; but there's just a chance. He'd never have come round without help from a first-rate medical officer, such as you find gallopin' all over India with Dobson's Punjaubees."

The rain could be heard in the distance, coming

on with a hurried tramp, like the march of a great army ; and the tumult of the wind which accompanied the tempest was as the roar of their voices. The glare of lightning and the volleys of thunder crashed forth out of the black sky from the gloomy pall of Heaven's battle like the blaze and furious outcry of the cannon.

"That's a pleasant look-out," cried MacBride. "We'll be washed out of this before very long, and have the eyes burned out of our heads, and the horses will kick us to death ; and if we live we'll have no breakfast, nor a stitch of dry clothes."

"If there was a man in India worth a button among those rebels, this would be the sort of night he'd select to attack us," added the doctor, after a heavy roll, which made the tent vibrate in every thread. "I don't speak so much of Sikhs as of Britishers like ourselves. We hate night fighting—you don't, Colonel, for you are always ready for a destruction of the tissues day or night—but most of us. Then our powder is wet, but swords keep sharp ; our drill doesn't do much good till we've all got together over the first fluster. If a fellow but knew his ground as these men do, how he would do a Hohenlinden now and then with the chill off."

Just as he spoke the report of firearms was distinctly heard in a lull of the storm.

"There! I thought I heard it before!" he exclaimed. "Bedad, here's the fellow I've been talking of turned up at last!"

The terrified servants ran in shouting out, "Oh, Sahib! Sahib! the budmashes! the budmashes!" A cuff on the head of a venerable-looking old gentleman, who was the foremost and noisiest of the throng, was Dobson's reply to the exclamation.

In an instant we were on our feet. We seized our swords and pistols, and rushed out of the tent.

Scarcely were we in our saddles ere by the lightning flashes, we saw bearing down on us a wild swarm of horsemen in white. To meet them in line was out of the question. Decision and coolness were invaluable, and in our leader and his officers these were the growth of constant peril, for they were men who had been carrying their lives in their hands every hour. In front of the grove there was a low bank of earth. In less time than I take to transcribe these lines, the Sikhs were formed inside the tope with their faces towards the enemy—one half dismounted—the horsemen in the rear. "Steady, my children; aim low when they're a few yards from the bank," cried Dobson. His officers

repeated the words. The cries of the enemy and the shouts of their leaders were audible above the trampling of the horses' hoofs. "Have your sword and pistol handy. It will be more use than your lancet," whispered Eustace. The lightning blazed out along the white-turbaned horde. We could catch the dark faces and bright blades for an instant, and the outstretched heads of the horses; and then as the thunder rolled above, the sparkle and flash of carbine and pistol twittered in the dark, and the rush of grape from our two guns on the flank hurtled through the sowars. But they were too close upon us; in another instant the rebel horsemen were engaged in a *mêlée* with our men. Their white turbans and coats marked them out as they rode in among the trees, where our kharkee was invisible. The nimble Sikhs on foot cut at and shot them as they passed. Louder than the shouts and the cries, and the clicking of steel, and the raging storm, rose Dobson's voice and the cheers of his officers. In less than a minute the sowars were flying out of the tope in the darkness, chased here and there across the plain as the lightning marked them out for an instant. Dobson was excited.

"Order Fordyce to limber up at once," he cried.

“ I’ll teach the scoundrels how they dare attack me again ! MacBride ! leave the surgeon to look after our wounded, with a party of men to pick them up and finish any of the budmashes who may be shamming. And now, my lads, to finish our night’s work.”

And ere I could say a word I was left alone in the wood, which was filled with groans and piteous cries, whilst my Sikhs went prowling about among the wounded, and——

Now and then they returned with a comrade, and I attended to their cuts as they were laid on the table of the mess-tent. An hour or more passed. The storm abated, the thunder ceased, but the lightning was still fierce and frequent. I sat, when my work was done, with my head between my hands, thinking of those in peril and of the horror of such scenes as those for timid women, when a cry of alarm caught my ear, and the cowering natives in the tent muttered, “ There, Sahib, they are coming again ! ” and vanished among the trees.

“ What is it ? ” I cried.

“ Mount and fly, sir,” was the answer of the terrified syce. I listened, and heard the tramp of advancing horses again. “ They are our men returning.”

“No; sowars! sowars! Sahib, fly!”

For me there was no flight. I felt my way out to the front of the wood. There could be no doubt as to who they were, for the fatal white shimmered in the darkness. And I was alone with the wounded and the dead—the sole miserable victim on whom they could wreak their vengeance! I felt the bitterness of death would not be to die, but that I did not die for her. The band swept past me, and as they moved towards the tents I heard a clear shrill voice in Hindostanee exclaim, ‘No time to kill, remember! Carry him to the litter, dead or alive, at once, and be off.’”

I crouched down in the grass. There was suddenly a great cry as if of rejoicing. The troopers returned out of the wood surrounding a light car on which there was a litter. By the side there rode a horseman, who bent forward and looked in between the curtains. He raised his head! I saw within a few feet of me the face which I had so wearily longed to see, and which was now to me more terrible than any enemy’s! Who could mistake the eyes—the eyes which sparkled with a keen delight as she raised her head from the curtain of the litter? I could have touched her robe had I sprang to my feet! I had seen her at last!

CHAPTER XIX.

“ MISERRIMUS.”

THE Sikhs and camp servants stealing back, found me lying like one that was dead, and bore me gently into the tent, where lay the wounded whom I had tended. But who was to bind *my* wound? Dobson and his baffled troops returned at daybreak. The European they had left in the Temple was gone. I was very ill; my head was weak and wandering. The yellow curtains opened for ever on the same scene, from daylight to evening. Day after day, as it seemed to me, I was borne along in my litter in a painless lethargy. Thick dust, and above it the heads of long-bearded troopers—the monotonous fields of gram and dall and Indian corn—the ever same trees—the ever same sounds of bit and curb, and horse-hoof, and the cry of the buzzard and the vulture. How I longed for the halt! . And again how I longed for the march! When we halted there were sure to come my doctor,

and Dobson and Eustace, and all. And the same questions, "How do you find yourself now?" and the same mutterings outside, of which I never could catch more than a mumble in reply to the question, "How do you think he is to-day?"

And I had no question but the one, "Is there any news from Auripore?" And the answer was for ever, "None." But one morning in came Dobson's bearded face, and without more to do he said—

"I'm glad to tell you Government has resolved to strike a blow for the relief of Auripore. We are to form part of the column."

That evening I was in the saddle. Pale and weak in the body, but a giant still, for I had faith and love—the springs of life—within me.

"What do the spies say, Mac Tavish?" asked the Brigadier. "What have the rascals got?"

"There is Nurpat Sing, 2000; some 500 pukka Sepoys, the rest Oude men; there is Pretty Poll Sing, 200 Byswarrees; the Rajah of Amethie, 2500, various; the Talukdar of Khote, 700 matchlockmen; the Moulvie of Sishabad, 700 sowars; the whole of Poppleton's Horse, under some unknown rascal; and the blessed Ranee of Auripore, with 2000 horse. They have no end of elephants, and 20 guns. That's the report my spies bring in, sir,"

quoth our Quartermaster-General, raising his eyes from his papers and glancing at his chief through a pair of portentous spectacles. "And it's pretty much what I expected," he added, taking a large pinch of snuff, and reinforcing it by a strong cheroot.

The Brigadier checked off the figures. "That makes in all, say at least 8000 men, and 20 guns. It is not three to one, and we have a battery and a half. I fear they will never wait for our coming, but at all events we shall have the credit of relieving the place." The Brigadier added, "It is good news to hear they are all holding out so well. Sir Denis is a splendid fellow!"

So much I overheard as the column halted within a day's march of Auripore, ere the morning sun had attained its full power. I could only clasp my hands and raise my eyes to Heaven.

But, as if misfortune was ever to be my portion, there came an order for me to take charge of the sick, when the force moved on. I said nothing. To think that Auripore was near, and to be tied like a martyr to the stake was beyond my control, and I resolved * * * *

They moved off, and once again I was left with my sad charge. I gazed after them through the watch-fires, and took note of their course. They will

halt in an hour, and wait for day ; then they will move on and reconnoitre the ground—that will be at four o'clock ; they have twelve miles to go ; the infantry are tired—they will need five hours at least to come within sight of the enemy—say nine o'clock at the outside. If I leave at six in the morning, I shall be in plenty of time. It's settled."

I walked back to my tent, visited my sick, and passed the gate of the walled enclosure in which the rear-guard was halted. The Belooch on duty presented as I gave the countersign.

"There are budmashes about, my lord," he remarked ; "for the jackals yelp over there, and the dogs are barking."

But I walked on, and heeded him not. The stars were shining brightly. I longed for the hour when I should be free, and strained my eyes towards the west in the direction of our column, and I followed the tracks made in the soft soil. Once I was startled by a noise in the grass, and I fancied I saw something move not far from me ; but it might have been a lizard. I relaxed my grasp of my pistol, and turning round set off on my way back to the camp fires, humming to myself.

Again the grass rustled. I stood still, with my hand on my revolver. Suddenly I was pinned by

the elbows—ere I could utter a cry a gag was forced into my mouth. I was dashed on the ground, my eyes were covered, I felt cords tied swiftly round my hands and feet, and then I was raised up and carried away head and foot, and thrown into a wheeled carriage, which travelled briskly forward. I felt my captors unbuckling my sword and removing my pistol-belt, and heard many voices around my carriage. The bonds which secured my hands behind my back were tightened, and my feet and legs were secured anew, and I was borne once more onwards. Once there was the sound of guns afar, the litter was halted ; then the booming died away. We went on and on, and I knew the sun was up, and that our pace was quickening. The heat became like that of a furnace. My nostrils were choked with dust—my breath came in spasms. The carriage stopped—I was lifted out, and I knew I stood in the shade ; the rope which bound my feet was loosed, I was forced down a flight of steps by strong hands. Then came the grating of a key and the drawing of bolts—a door was opened ; the cool, damp air would have been grateful had it not been so dank and fetid. I was led down steps—One ! two ! three ! four ! five ! six ! seven ! eight ! nine ! ten ! I counted them. Then I felt a hand busy at my wrists ; I

struggled to shake off the cords—the door closed with a heavy clang. I tore off the bandage from my eyes, and as I tugged at the knotted twine which held the gag to my bleeding lips, I looked around and uttered a bitter cry—for there seemed indeed no hope.

It was broad daylight, but the walls of the cell around which I gazed were rendered visible only by an iron cresset from the low roof. It was round and arched and windowless, and the sole access was by the steps down which I had just been led. At one side was a native charpoy or bed, a rude table by its side was covered with a mat, on which there was placed an earthen vessel of water, a heap of cakes, and a plate of boiled rice. I was dying of thirst and ravenous with hunger; and, as men condemned to die will make a hearty breakfast, in spite of all my misery I drank and ate. I threw myself on the bed, for my fever was strong on me again. With closed eyes I was striving to collect my thoughts, when a noise above attracted my attention. And lo! there descended from the roof, through an aperture in which the lamp was suspended, a cord, with a basket attached, which was lowered to the floor. In the basket there was a bottle of wine, chupatties or native cakes, and a fowl. In the obscurity I

overlooked a piece of paper ; but the basket was shaken from above, and looking again I saw a little note. I read with difficulty—

“ Do not quite despair. Friends are near ; though not powerful. But they may help you. Hope and be firm.”

It was a woman's hand. I looked up and whispered, “ God bless you, my unknown friend. Tell me who you are. In pity, tell me where I am.” There came back a sigh for answer. The basket was shaken after a time and drawn up. Worn out and ill nigh to death, I lay down on the charpoy and slept. I was awakened, after sleeping a troubled sleep, by a sound in the vaulted room. A negro, armed to the teeth, had brought in bread, rice, and water, at the doorway stood a Sepoy on guard. I spoke, but they made no reply to my entreaties to know where I was. “ I am ill—very ill—tell my gaoler I shall very soon be beyond his power,” I cried ; “ but at least, ere I die, let me know what is the news from Auripore.” No answer. The door was locked and chained, and bolted, and I was left alone.

I had never heard of the native chiefs, in this cruel war, making prisoners—at least they were reserved for slaughter we were told, though the

country people often concealed fugitives and treated them kindly. I was of no consequence as a captive, but I had been pounced upon as if I were a great prize. For whom could they have mistaken me? Who was my unknown friend?

How years of misery were concentrated in every hour, as I walked round and round the prison, or crossed to and fro, or threw myself on the bed, and tossed my arms like a maniac! "One day of freedom—one day of strength—give me that, and I will come back and die, if it be Thy will. But, oh! this is more than I can bear."

And two days and nights passed. My blood now boiled, and now ran like ice through my veins—my teeth chattered with the ague fits. My gaolers came in and went out as before. I could not mark the hours, nor tell day from night, and they would not open their accursed lips. "Ah, even if I were free to-morrow, darling, I could not help you!" I cried passionately, and dashed my clenched fist on the table.

"Do not despair," whispered the voice from above, "I am doing my best; but be firm."

"Oh, my good friend, whoever you are, give me news of Auripore; and I shall be as a rock, if you can tell me all is well." No answer; but a frag-

ment of paper came fluttering through the gloom, and I could make out the words, "To-night, if possible."

The dungeon in which I was confined was lined with a hard, white cement, and had been used as a subterranean granary, and I guessed that the aperture above was on a level with the ground floor. I dragged over the charpoy, put the table upon it, mounted; my hand could just reach the cresset. I made a spring, and caught the thin chain by which the lamp was suspended, heedless of the burning, and, in a momentary fit of desperate strength, was striving to climb up to the roof, when the chain gave way, and I crashed back on the frail pile I had erected, and rolled on the floor in the *débris*, in utter darkness, for the lamp was extinguished.

I regained my feet, cleared the dust and the mouldy corn from my face and hair. The guards would no doubt be alarmed at the noise. Ha! they are here! Fool, why could you not wait?

The bolts were drawn, the chains clanked as they struck the massive door; the key turned in the lock; the door grated on its hinges and opened gently. I strained my eyes, but could see nothing.

"Where are you?" asked a voice in English; after a pause, "What has become of the light?"

"I have just upset the lamp."

"No matter; come over and take my hand. Here!"

I groped my way towards the voice. My fingers, as I raised my hands aloft, touched the face of my deliverer, who was standing on the step, and I caught her hand and pressed it to my lips.

"Tell me to whom I owe more than my life; surely I have heard that voice before?"

"There is not a moment to lose; follow me. Catch hold of my dress till we come to the light. Ali, are you there?"

There was a response in the dark somewhere, and my guide locked, bolted, and chained the door of the cell and led the way along the passages I had descended, till we came near an open court, from which the night air blew fresh. Here we halted; Ali, opening a bundle, wrapped me in a long white robe, put a turban on my head, and stole to the door. There was a watch-fire in the court, and the sound of hubble-bubbles warned us some of the guard were awake. The figure of my guide was muffled up so that I could not see her face; her fingers returned the pressure, which was the mute interpretation of my gratitude.

Ali crept back, and spoke in a low voice.

“It is more than we could hope for,” she said. “Come along, and walk by my side. If we are challenged or stopped I will answer.”

She stepped into the court-yard, and I followed her. The guards turned inquiringly; but at a gesture and a word which I could not catch, salaamed and resumed their pipes. We walked across the court to an open postern; she led me up a flight of steps to a long corridor; then we descended into a chamber where a lamp was burning. My guide, after a careful survey of the tapestry which screened the paneled wall, pushed aside a slide and followed a narrow passage, choked with dust and cobwebs, till she reached an iron grating which was unlocked. We passed out into a ravine. The stars were shining aloft, as though we were in a deep well.

“This is the moat,” she whispered. “Directly opposite is a flight of steps by which you will gain the top of the bank. Creep through the weeds—they are full of poisonous things; but what can be worse than that?” she pointed backwards with her thumb. “You speak Hindostanee? Well! Go straight on till you come to a pillar of stone, which you will see this clear night some way off. There you will find a guide who will lead you to a place

of safety for the day. If all goes well, you may expect to see me at night, and we will fly together to our friends. I am in as much misery as you are. I am a prisoner in a dreadful captivity. I must end it one way or other ; and if I die, you will pity me."

" Mabel Fraser ! dear, dear Mab ! Nay, I know you, my deliverer ! In the name of God, how came you here ? Fly with me now !"

She threw her arms round my neck.

" Oh, did I not tell you once, my poor boy, what a fate there was in store for us ? Little did I think my words would come so true. Terence, I know all now. There is one thing I *can* do—I can die for you, my brother."

" Your brother, Mabel !" I cried.

" Hush ! No time for explanation now. I will tell you all to-morrow. They have beaten us back—forgive my ' us'—if you could but know how I hate the wretches—again and again, at Auripore ; and there is scarcely any one left to guard this place. But I expect him back to-night."

" Him ! Who ?"

" Oh, go, Terence, go ! Take this in case of need. And this."

She handed me a dagger and a pistol.

"That," she went on, "is poisoned, a scratch of it will kill. That was loaded by Ali. This I shall keep, to be my last sure friend in case of need. And now, farewell! May He have mercy and pity on us both, dear brother. I would give my life for you. If you never see me again, keep a place for me in your memory."

She tore herself from my embrace, and ran weeping up the passage. The grate closed behind her with a dull clang. A wolf in the moat barked at the sound. Perhaps the lazy sentinel high on the wall of the bastion fancied he saw something crawl up the steps in the counterscarp, for he called out but he did not fire. And I was soon hid among the thick reeds and weeds of the glacis. I made my way towards the pillar which I discerned on the plain. As I approached a man got up from the base. I replied to his challenge with the word Mabel had given me.

He salaamed, and striking down a bye-path, turned into a jungle, through which he led me with unerring certainty. The tiger growled as we brushed past the place where he lay crunching the bones of the fawn; the hissing leopard bounded across our path; a herd of elephants, trumpeting and playing, crashed through the foliage. Things—the snake

rustling the leaves at my feet, and the crouching wild beast—that would have before been terrors, were indifferent to me now. I toiled on after the silent Indian, who never stopped or tired, till the morning began to dawn, and then we came out near the edge of the jungle, where it bordered the cultivated land round a native village.

Here my guide bade me remain, and made his way cautiously towards a cottage which stood near a large tank. I watched him enter; in a few moments he returned, and, standing at the edge of the jungle, gave a long keen look all around him. Then, pointing to the cottage, he said—

“Go there, sahib. It is empty; you will find food and shelter. A girl will come ere the sun sets. If any one else approach, hide beneath the old matting in the corner. But keep on the watch always. Go now. Soon the people will be stirring; it is near sunrise. To-night you will be safe.”

I walked between the high green stalks of the dall, pushed aside the mat, and found myself in a small native hovel. Quite worn out, I dragged my limbs to the heap of rushes in the corner, and lay down with my hand on the trigger of the pistol. As I closed my weary eyes, I read on the silver-plated hilt, “Charles Alan Fraser.” I slept.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CRISIS AND ITS END.

WHEN I awoke it was noonday—noonday in the hottest month of the Indian year. I drank gratefully from the water-jar and ate the tough chupaties which were laid upon a leaf. I reconnoitred the scene around me through the chinks in the cabin wall.

Far as the eye could reach lay in front a wide expanse of fields spread out, studded with clumps of mangoes and dotted with trees, which loomed indistinctly in the haze, like grey clouds resting on wintry seas.

From the leaden air fell waves of heat which moved in pulse-like throbs over the sickened earth—not a cloud was visible—not a sound was heard except the shrill cry of the buzzard and the rustle of parched leaves and twigs which danced in the feverish twirl of tiny dust storms. The sun poured its fire through an atmosphere like a veil of silver cloth, which glowed with the fervour, and the un-

dulating outlines of horizon and landscape dissolved in the intensity of its power. The lizards panted on the soil; the birds sat with open bill and protruding tongue on the lowest branches of the trees, which gave shade but not shelter.

The arched dome and whitewashed pillars of a Hindoo shrine rose above the tank at one side. At the other the belt of jungle spread to the horizon, widening as it receded. On the branches of a withered tree, a little distance from the road, a group of gorged vultures, with outspread wings and drooping heads. The skeleton of a horse, to which were attached fragments of leather and of its trappings, lay beneath the tree.

A young woman with a pitcher on her head, was moving through the fields. As she came near the tank the notes of her sweet, monotonous song broke the silence, and presently the rings of metal and little bells round her ankles were heard tinkling in unison with her voice, and marking the time of her footsteps. Her figure had all the grace and pliancy of the young Hindoo. Her robes of white cotton fell in easy folds from the shoulders. Bracelets of beads encircled the finely-moulded arms, one of which was upraised to the pitcher on her head. Her clear brown skin enhanced the whiteness of her teeth.

and the opalesque purity of the eye ; and her broad, low brow was set in the massive frame of her braided hair, which shone with a blue lustre like that of the raven's wing.

With balanced tread she descended the steps to the water, and searching gently by the edge, removed a gourd from the brink ; then filling the pitcher, she placed it on her head, took up the gourd, and, singing as before, walked down the narrow path. As she approached the spot where the skeleton of the horse tainted the air, disturbing the vultures with a motion of her hand, where they dreamed of horrid banquets, she threw the gourd into the bushes. When she passed the cottage again, she placed her finger on her lip. In a few minutes she disappeared amidst the green sea of pulse.

I was sure the gourd was intended for me, but her gesture indicated fear and caution. Scarcely had she passed my hiding place ere a man appeared at the door of the temple. He crept up to the edge of the tank, and lying down, gazed after the woman beneath his hand. Then he arose, and came towards my cabin.

A string of beads showed he was a Brahmin. His hair, partly shaven from the crown, hung from his head in tangled locks, thickened with a paste of

coloured clay; an ape-like brow descended over small, dull, sunken eyes, animated by cruelty and cunning. His meagre body, daubed with yellow and white clay, was nearly naked; his finger-nails were like the talons of a wild beast.

He sniffed the air with pleasure, and grunting out the words of a poojah or prayer, bent down, took up the hot dust and rubbed it over his neck and shoulders.

He was following the path towards the village, when a cloud of dust in the distance, like those which careered from time to time over the plain, but that it was wider at the base, and moved steadily, attracted his attention. The fakir, with a speed wonderful in one so decrepit, ran to the top of the tank, looked intently, shading his eyes with his hands, and in a moment darted into the little temple.

The cloud advanced, eating up the broad expanse of the plain, thickened and deepened, and resolved itself into a pall of dust, which rose up from a throng of men and horses. How my heart beat! But, alas! the thrill of joy was soon stilled. It was the enemy again—the cruel, pitiless enemy! No hope! The white dresses of native troopers distinct; the elephants rising above the heads of the horsemen; in their train a multitude on foot!

No hope now ! They directed their course towards the tank, the brown embankments of which could be seen high above the plain. Soon the confused tumult of a native march rose to the ear, the tramp and neighing of horses, the clinking of arms, the shrill trumpet-ing of elephants, and the angry growlings of camels. Spears and glistening shields returned a thousand rays to the sun. In a wild rush, like the mountain torrent leaping into the valley, horsemen, footmen, women and children, elephants, camels, horses, mules, dashed into the tank. Elephants, plunging their trunks low and deep, discharged the refreshing streams into their capacious gullets, camels laid in their supply, horses snorted with pleasure, the natives flung the water over their shaven heads; and as fast as the jaded followers came up, they covered the tank sides with a multitude, whose cries and movement offered a strange contrast to the silence but a few moments before.

A group of horsemen rode to the tree over the cabin where I lay, and dismounted close to it. They sat apart from the rest in the shade, on their carpets. The eldest was a short fat man of fifty years of age. The streaks of paint on his nose and forehead marked him as a Hindoo. In front of his large white turban sparkled an aigrette of flat, thin dia-

monds and large uncut emeralds ; his small, deeply sunk, and rat-like eyes, moved about incessantly in their narrow orbits,—his broad and coarse nose, with wide nostrils, rested on a stubbly, stunted moustache, which did not conceal the straight, sensual mouth ; a thick neck, which grew abruptly from his rounded shoulders, nearly hid in its fat folds a triple row of pearls and emeralds. A white muslin tunic, leaving one side of his breast exposed, was confined by a Cashmere shawl, into which was stuck a curved sabre, with a small silver handle. His legs were encased in drawers of white cotton cloth, and on the naked great toe of each small delicate foot was a silver ring. Three attendants stood with folded arms by the side of his carpet, on which were laid his slippers, a common cavalry pistol, and a box of Indian sweetmeats. A syce, holding a fine sinewy Arab, whose sides bore marks of severe punishment, remained close at hand, and another gently flapped away the flies.

The man seated next to the Hindoo seemed to be about thirty years of age, or perhaps younger. Rather over the middle height, his person combined grace and strength in a union rarely seen among the Mahomedans of India. His head was well set on a wide and sinewy chest, which fell away in

rounded lines to the small muscular flank, and his limbs, compact and admirably moulded, completed the promise of vigour given by his nervous arms and hands. His turban had been removed for a small skull cap of silver tissue, beneath which fell a few shining ringlets of black hair. A broad, smooth forehead, with arched brows—a Grecian nose—a well-cut, firm mouth, an arched upper lip fringed by a full moustache—grey eyes, which shone from the bronze-coloured skin, now cold and fierce, again open and kind—altogether a face expressive of every phase of his Asiatic nature, in which the moving power was worship of his blood, which he believed to be that of the Prophet of his race, transmitted through a line of warriors and kings—the sole inheritance which had been left to him. He wore as his only ornaments, an engraved stone set in a silver ring on his finger, and a sword belt, studded with precious stones, round his waist. The third of the group was a meagre old man, small in stature, bowed with years, with a thin, haggard Jewish face, which was made almost dignified by the massive folds of an immense white beard. The Moulvie's eyes were dim, and his fingers were busily employed in running over a string of beads, as if in want of something to do.

The fakir walked out of the temple, and with outstretched arms and the palms of his hands clasped together, advanced to the carpet. After a pause, during which the leaders surveyed the new comer, the Moulvie asked, "And who is my brother?"

"My name is Canoujee," the Brahmin said. "Rejoiced am I to see the conquering army of their mightinesses in this oppressed country, who have no doubt killed all the infidels in Oude."

A grunt from the party was the only reply.

"There was a great fight," the fakir continued, "here two nights ago. A party of feringhees, flying perhaps from the face of their highnesses, drew up here to water their horses. But I crept to the village, and brought out the bowmen and the matchlockmen, and we set upon the infidels and slew them, though they fought like demons; and fired as from a regiment so many shots that none could approach. And three of the people are now lying wounded and one is dead from the fight." The fakir pointed with his forefinger to the withered tree, on which the vultures were seated. "The bones of one lie scattered there. Who would touch them but dogs and jackals and the vultures? Others rode away towards the east, just able to sit on their horses—dead, surely, ere this."

“Have you got nothing,” asked the Mussulman, “by which we may know who these *feringhees* were?”

The fakir went into the temple, and returned, carrying a linen bag. “In this,” said he, “are things which they left in their flight. I do not know the language of the infidel.” He poured out the contents on the grass. A silver flask, a small clasped book, bound in green velvet, embossed and edged in gold, a hunting knife, a glove, and a little leather case.

The Mussulman took up the book, and tried to unclasp it; he pored over the letters raised in gold on the cover.

“Where is the sahib?” asked he. “If he were here he would tell us what this means.”

“Why disturb the sahib, Prince?” said the old moulvie. “Has he not toiled in the fight and in the saddle enough to-day?”

“It is always thus with our good moulvie,” said the other speaker with some bitterness. “He is of opinion that the white-faced follower he has won for the Prophet is worth all the rest of us. He is always thinking of his deeds and singing his praises. When *he* is in no hurry, time stands still—when *he* is in haste, time is asleep.”

"My son," rejoined the moulvie, "I am just. Be thou so too, oh Prince! and leave jealousies which destroy us. Is the sahib your slave, that he should come running to be your interpreter at the beck of your servants?"

One of the attendants, salaaming humbly, exclaimed, "My lords, the Sahib Bahadoor is coming!" and at the same time held his hand in the direction of a man who was walking by the side of his horse with quick, vigorous steps towards the shade.

He was not of the race of the Hindoo or the Mussulman—that could be seen even afar by his solid heavy tread, his powerful limbs, and the swing of his arms.

He came near. And within a few yards of me I recognised with a shudder—Alan Fraser! In complexion he was nearly as dark as a native, but his hair was uncut, and flowed in grey locks over his shoulders; a heavy sabre was slung by a broad belt over his shoulder, and his waist-belt held two double-barrelled pistols. He took a cheroot out of his case, and flung himself down on the ground in the shade. No one spoke as his servant applied the coal to the end of his cheroot, and after a few vigorous puffs, he broke silence abruptly.

"I saw the skeleton of a horse, with foreign

shoes on its hoofs, down there. They tell me in the village they killed some feringhees—cowardly brutes! But it's well to get rid of the vermin any way, and that way was best suited to our friends."

"My son!" interrupted the old moulvie, "these poor people may have done the cause a good service. See!—Read! and tell us what this writing is."

Fraser turned over lazily on the grass to take the case from the moulvie's hand. He opened the catch after he had languidly glanced at the outside. With a bound he stood erect, and holding the case at arm's length, smote his thigh with vehemence; his eyes glared, the veins of his neck and face swelled full of the fierce currents from his wicked heart. With a coarse imprecation he shouted out, in Hindostanee, "By —— it's he!—It's he! Where was this found? Whose is this? Speak, you——!"

"What is it, my son?" inquired the old moulvie.

"What is it—what is it?" Fraser roared. "Ask me no questions till mine are answered."

The fakir could only articulate, "Sahib, it was found by me on the ground near the tank, the night we killed the infidels."

“Did you kill the man who owned this? *Did* you kill him?” shouted Fraser.

“Alas! how can I tell who owned it:—the case and the book, and the other things, were found on the ground.”

Fraser read and re-read the words, dashing from his brows the drops of perspiration, and worked his fingers in the ends of his moustache.

“Lead me to the place where you killed these feringhees!” The fakir followed him, and as he strode towards the skeleton of the horse, the Hindoo broke silence: “These people are wonderful! What can he see in bones?—they cannot speak.”

“Have you not learned yet, O Mightiness! that the sahibs know things of which you know nothing?” asked the Prince, scornfully. “See! he has made some discovery, even among the dumb bones!”

Fraser returned with a letter in his hand. “Do you know what this is?” he asked. “Listen to me. Here is a copy of an order, containing instructions to the enemy who are hunting you down on every side. All the measures against us are the work of one man. And this man is my bitterest foe, as well as yours. Think you, Prince, that it was for love of your cause I gave up all that bound me to my race? that I became an outcast, flying with a cowardly

rabble from the very shadows of my countrymen ; and I—with a greater fear than the greatest coward of you all at my heart—that I toiled at Cawnpore, at Delhi, at Lucknow, in the midst of traitors ? No ! But I have hate as strong as yours ! Reverend gentlemen like the fakir are subject to little aberrations. When he told me he and his friends had killed these infidels, I naturally doubted. I have looked. The bones of no European lie on that plain ! The horse of the man who owned that letter and that book was killed. *He may* have been wounded ; any way he cannot be far. Alive or dead, we must have that man. Let us act at once. Search every house, every bush, every inch of ground. He *must* be found !”

“ Sahib,” said the Prince, who preserved an unconcerned air, but had kept a keen eye on the speaker, “ who is this man ?”

“ Is not the paper I hold enough for you ? Is he not the trusted agent of the enemy ? And does he not know you all better than you know yourselves ?”

The pistol, with “ Charles Alan Fraser” on the hilt, was grasped more firmly now.

“ Yes, yes ! he is right !” said the Hindoo. “ Let us search for the infidel—let us drive the jungle.

It is late, and we should lose no time ; orders and arrangements should be made at once."

And the Hindoo rose with alacrity and was about to mount his horse, when the sowars, posted on the verge of a field in rear of the camp, came at full speed towards the temple, shouting out—

"The enemy ! the enemy ! the feringhees are coming !"

In an instant the cooking places were deserted, the brass pots gathered up, the uncooked rice over-set ; the elephants and camels untethered in head-long haste, the tawdry tents struck ; women and children screamed ; camp followers ran to load their beasts ; horsemen forced the bits into the jaws of their steeds and sprung into their saddles. Those who were eating dropped the handful of food into the dish, seized their turbans, wound them on, lighted the matches of their guns, or examined flints and priming. At the first alarm, Fraser mounted and rode to a mound near the temple, whence he returned, after a long look, to the agitated chiefs near me.

"What do you see ?" asked the sirdar, impatiently.

"Prince Feroze ! The feringhees are coming, sure enough. Three strong squadrons, the same who left

their mark on us at daylight ! Certainly, they are anxious we should not over-eat ourselves."

"Have they guns? Have they infantry?"

"Guns I cannot see; and surely your Highness cannot think that after such an exhilarating run as we had this morning, the feringhee infantry could be so near us except by magic."

"Then why shall we not fight? Three squadrons—three hundred men? Why we have nearly five hundred good sowars and two hundred sepoy, besides matchlock men!"

"Look, Prince, and see where the sowars and sepoy are."

The camp fires threw up little whirling columns of smoke into the air, through which might be seen figures vanishing, and far as the eye could reach the plain was dotted with a mass of fugitives, the front of which had already reached the horizon, carrying with it a cloud of dust. The old priest was standing in front of a line, which did not consist of more than forty troopers. He had a pair of large horn spectacles on his nose, and with a deep guttural voice chanted forth the fiery verses of the Koran which promise eternal life and eternal delights to those who die for the faith.

"Cowards! curses on them!" shouted the Prince,

savagely. "Let us stand here and and die. I am tired of flying!"

"Were we but sure of dying, Prince, I should not decline your proposal," replied Fraser. "But I have a decided objection to being hanged like a dog, and I do not suppose your Excellency would desire to go out of the world smeared with the fat of swine. They must be crippled indeed," he continued, after another look at the enemy. "They surely made us out long ago."

"Oh! it is too bad," said the Prince; "it is too bad, that now, when we have a chance of sending the infidels to perdition—when we might have wiped away some of our disgrace——"

"Yes, indeed, Prince. They are but a few English and Sikhs. But the fact is, the sepoys and matchlockmen are running away very fast. Therefore, Prince, as you, the stout gentleman you call the Peishwa, the old moulvie, and myself, with a few horse are scarce able to hold the ground, why we had better leave it. And perhaps," looking through his glass again, "the sooner the better, for our friends having had a short halt to reconnoitre, are now coming on pretty fast."

Taking his horse from his syce and mounting as he spoke, Fraser rode from the mound.

“God is great,” chanted the Moulvie in a sonorous voice. “He has spoken. Destroy those who refuse to acknowledge that God is God and that Mahomet is his prophet! Let those who obey be spared! But do thy work as God has appointed and he will reward thee! Death for the faith is life eternal! Death for the faith opens to you the heaven of heavens where God rewards——”

As the troopers, grave middle-aged men, were listening with flashing eyes to the rolling words of their priest, the Prince, placing his hand on the old man’s shoulder, said sadly, “Alas! not now, not now, good moulvie! We must still bear our sorrows below, for those who are coming may not do us the favour of killing us in battle. The unclean dogs may rather seek to add a new terror to death and to deprive us of heaven. The sepoys are gone—the Hindoo is ready to fly.”

As he uttered the last words a murmur rose from the Mussulman troopers, “Yes, the Hindoo! the Peishwa is flying and all his men!”

The Moulvie mounted, and with his party followed the runaways. They passed through the *débris* of the camp—over cooking places in which the fires were still burning—through picket stakes and ropes, over fragments of clothing and old shoes, and then

broke into a gallop. When they had got quite clear of the broken ground they gave spur to their horses, as if by common impulse, and swept by the side of the jungle at full speed.

Scarcely had the last man rode off ere I bounded out of the cabin and flew to the top of the tank frantic with the excitement and tension of the danger I had been suffering. They were coming; but oh! how slowly! I shaded my eyes—I watched the tardy column, when a shrill cry caused me to turn my head. I was in time to escape a blow aimed at me by the fakir, who had crept out from the temple behind me. The cry was from the Hindoo girl, at whom he made a thrust of his knife, and he dived into the tank just as I fired. Once more he appeared, dived again, and rising, climbed the bank at the other side, unhurt from my eager fire, and dashed into the zone of corn that surrounded the hamlet. The girl, pointing with alarm to the advancing horse, fled into the cabin.

CHAPTER XXI.

SAVED AGAIN.

As I stood in my strange attire in the centre of the group of officers of Dobson's Horse—for it was no other than the very regiment which had so miraculously saved me—received congratulations on my escape, and answered eager questions respecting my capture, captivity, deliverance, and recent peril, the air of dejection on the faces of Dobson, Beecher, and their comrades, prepared me for bad news.

“What of Auripore, Colonel?” I asked at length. “You know how anxious I am, and will excuse me interrupting you.”

“We have got into Auripore.”

“Oh, that is indeed joyful! And Sir Denis and the garrison?”

“You shall hear all the news presently, never fear. But at present——”

“Only one word,” I interrupted once more. “Is Sir Denis Desmond safe? Can you tell me any-

thing of the women—of Miss Butler? If you knew, gentlemen, how I feel——”

“The nuisance of it is, we can tell nothing positive. The fact is, that we made rather a hash of the relief. We were with Potter’s column, which moved down on the east side; that old woman, Muddell, should have cut off the rebels on the west, so as to force them over the Raptee into Nepaul, or drive them south into the arms of Mullit’s corps. The garrison was reduced to the lowest ebb, and, hang me, if Sir Denis Desmond and old Tickler didn’t make a sortie, go slap through the enemy’s camp, and get clear away before we appeared before the place.”

“Bravo! Thank God.”

“Wait a bit, Doctor. They struck out for Muddell’s Division, but the wretched muff was humbugged by false reports of an enemy in his rear, and halted two marches off. Of course Tickler left his guns behind him, and had few horse, and, when the rebels recovered their surprise, they set out in a furious rage after the little column, which had a terrible time of it, fighting and marching in such weather, harassed by thousands of scoundrels. Tickler, with the main body, fortunately stumbled on Mullit’s cavalry, but the Commissioner and a few troopers,

relying on their knowledge of the country, separated from the column, and managed to reach the Commander in Chief's camp."

"Thank God, once more!"

"Yes. But then, again, Sir Denis, as soon as he had seen His Excellency, set out with instructions for Mullit's Division, as he was anxious to go with it to Beel, where it is to proceed, now that Auri-pore is free, to liberate the women, who, as we heard only three days ago, were cut off from Agra, and were shut up there by the Rohilcund rebels. He has not been seen since, and up to last night had not reached Mullit. We fear very much he has come across some of the bands we have broken up, and which are scattered in all directions. Their game is nearly over. You have just seen the most dangerous enemies we have—Feroze and the Moulvie of Lucknow. Much as I should have liked to bag them, we would all be most pleased with the sight of that treble-dyed traitor, apostate, and villain, Fraser, swinging from that tree. However, their time will come, one and all. Eustace," he continued, "send a line to the Brigadier, and ask if we shall fall back and join the column as soon as horses and men are rested. You shall see Auri-pore, in which you are so much interested, Mr.

Brady, to-morrow night. I hope by the time we get there we shall have news of the safety of the poor women in Beel."

"And what, sir," I asked, "is to be done about Sir Denis Desmond?"

"Oh! we trust he will turn up. A knowing old bird like him with a clear head and his wits about him is not easily caught."

The fakir's story, Fraser's excitement, suddenly flashed across me. I arrested Dobson's attention at once.

"By all means let us look for the missing man. It may be as you think. How lucky if it should be so!"

An active search was made by the troopers. All in vain—there was no trace of the owner of the dead horse; but that it was shod in the European fashion was clear. The articles the fakir had exhibited were gone. The gourd! There might be something there. I walked to the place. The gourd was trampled and broken up by a horse's hoof, but I found in it a piece of paper rolled up, which I opened, and I read:—

"Who are you? I am a countryman, not far distant. We are in great peril. Beware of the fakir. You may trust the bearer. Put your reply in here.—D. D."

I uttered a shout, and ran to Dobson with my prize.

“Sir Denis Desmond is somewhere near us, Colonel! See this paper! He is not far off. This is his handwriting. I know it well.”

Beecher, Eustace, and myself galloped through the dall towards the hamlet, and came in sight of a little group of natives. I recognised the figure of the old Indian who had acted as my guide. Two women and a tall man followed him—dressed like peasants. They were advancing to meet us. We drew near. You may imagine my pleasure when I heard Sir Denis’ well-known voice exclaim—

“Mabel, cheer up! We are saved. All is right now. And is it possible—you, Terence! you here?”

Mabel could only give a little cry—“There is Terence,” and fainted away. I leaped to the ground, and took the exhausted girl in my arms. She had travelled all day in the heat of the sun. Her tender little feet were cut and bleeding, and full of thorns.

We bore her tenderly to the cottage, for indeed life was very feebly holding its own in that delicate little frame. Water was brought; and Mab, opening her eyes for a moment, as if to assure herself of the reality of her safety, closed them

again, and, as she clung to me, sobbing, "My dear brother!" and no more, the tears of thankfulness and joy rolled down her cheeks, furrowing the dye which disguised their whiteness.

When Sir Denis, after an interview with Dobson, who was delighted at his rescue, came to us, he found her fast asleep, with her arm round my neck.

"And Mary—your niece I mean, sir—Miss Butler?"

"She is safe in Beel; and we shall see her in two days. I never knew her obstinate—indeed, disobedient is the right word—before. It was only in compliance with my positive orders she consented to leave Auripore; and God knows what I should have done had I not insisted. She never could have got away with us, or borne the fatigues we underwent."

"And you, sir!"

"And I! To find ourselves hiding for our lives within a few hundred yards of each other in a hamlet on the borders of the Terai! What an escape we have both had! And what an adventure this would be for a novel!"

His horse was shot under him: the obscurity of the night enabled him to creep away and hide in the jungle. In the morning he secured a villager, by a promise of a thousand rupees, to try to get

him away, or inform any of the columns which were scouring the north of Oude and Rohilcund of his danger.

Ramdeen repaired to the Fort of Roab, where he knew Mabel Fraser was in charge of the Nawab, but she could do nothing. Assured, however, of the man's fidelity and of that of his daughter, she contrived the plan for my escape. The surprise of Sir Denis when Mabel, on the point of death, was carried in by the peasant and his daughter, can scarcely be imagined. Then came the alternations of hope and fear, despair and joy for us both. I told him my story; and when, speaking low, I said I had seen Alan Fraser that very day among the rebels, an expression of anger and scorn passed over his face, which turned to pity as he pointed to the sleeping girl.

"Do not mention his name to *her*. Unfortunate child! She is the only creature on earth who cares for him; and even now she would be by his side had he not wished to make her abjure her faith and marry the Nawab of Roab! We must guard her now, Brady."

"Roab? Roab? Why that is the name of the place where I was carried off."

"I suspect Fraser was at the bottom of it. You

know the Ranee, your precious mother, is in the field with the rebels !”

“ Alas ! I do, sir. I saw her just as I saw Alan Fraser.”

“ You saw your mother !—you ? Where, in heaven’s name ? And how are you alive ?”

“ The night I joined Dobson’s Horse, when the camp was surprised, she led the sowars. She was within two yards of me. I beheld her face distinctly. She is still very, very beautiful.”

“ And what did they do ?”

“ They carried off a wounded European, whom I did not see—a man our cavalry picked up on the ground that morning. He was not killed, but they put him in a litter and carried him away most tenderly.”

“ Who on earth could he have been ? No one knows, you say ? God help him, whoever he is—in the claws of the tigress indeed ! We must only hope it was no one we care about.”

I marched on foot beside poor Mabel’s litter. She—the timid little creature whom I had so much distrusted—clung to me, and told me of all her sorrows. But whilst the fate of Mary was doubtful I could not take any interest in my half-sister’s confidences, not even when, most astounding of all,

she asserted that Maurice Prendergast had come to Oude from Persia, whither he had gone in the Russian employ after the Crimean war, and had joined the rebels, with whom he was serving as one of their most trusted leaders at her father's instigation.

The next afternoon our troops halted on a plain watered by a deep river.

"You can just see the top of the Residency of Auripore from this," said Sir Denis.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MEETING AND THE PARTING.

As the evening was fine, I mounted my pony and rode over to Auripore at sunset. The town was deserted, but there was a mendicant at the gate who directed me to the palace. It was surrounded by high walls. The garrison held, however, only the Rajah's palace, the Commissioner's residence, and some large houses which they had fortified and enclosed with a rampart.

I gave my horse to the syce, telling him I would walk back to the camp, and made my way towards the gilt cupolas, which bore marks of the rebels' artillery. I need not recount all I saw in my ramble through the shattered house of the Rajahs of Auripore. I entered the court-yard. There was the open gallery described by Harness; the steps, the corridor, the site of the throne, the spot where Sir Denis had exposed the contriver of the clever plot to defeat, ignominy, and shame. I entered the rooms of state—of what once had been state—all tawdry and faded now; passed through

long galleries and chambers neglected and covered with the mortar and rubbish brought down from the walls and ceilings by shot or bursting shells, and came to the harem or Zenanah. I was curious to see if there was any trace left of the last "Ranee of Aripore," to judge with my own eyes what sort of existence it was which such a restless pleasure-loving being could have passed in that seclusion. But these nests of rooms gave me no clue to the life of the banished inmates. They were nearly empty ; the furniture and hangings decayed and worthless. In one apartment, however, there was a carpet on the floor, a sofa, several ottomans, table and writing materials, and by the envelopes and fragments of papers lying about I conjectured it had been occupied by one of the officers of the garrison during the siege. I sat down for a moment, pondering over the events which had so thronged upon me. I had had little time for reflection. I fell into one of my reveries and my fancy wandered in this deserted palace, full of strange interest for me, till I fell into a gentle sleep. It must have been late when I woke up, for it was pitch dark, and I started at finding myself alone. I rose and groped my way across the room. All at once I stopped. I heard footsteps coming along the passage towards the door by which I had

entered! My recent peril had not made me cautious as it ought,—it flashed across me that I might have been tracked by some lurking enemy. More than one of our officers had lost his life lately in the course of careless rambles through the streets of apparently deserted cities. What a fool I am! I ran to the opposite door—it was locked! I hastened to fasten that which led into the room the way I had come, that I might stand at bay till I knew who were these visitors. But ere I could reach it the door was pushed open—And there stood before me—the “Ranee of Auripore!” My mother was face to face with me again! She held a lamp in one hand, and at the sight of a European she uttered an exclamation, clapped her hand to her girdle, and as I dropped my hand, quite aghast, she was about to fire, when a voice exclaimed, “Highness! ’tis your son!”

She looked at me doubtingly for a moment, advanced, and held the light towards my face, and said—

“Is Mohun right? Are you indeed Terence Brady, my son?”

“Unhappy mother! May Heaven forgive you! My life is in your hands. But, madam, such son as you deserve to have, I am to you.”

I turned away my eyes. I could not bear to

look at her. The original of the picture—still lovely exceedingly, though time and fierce passions had left their impress on her face—was standing with her eyes fixed upon me. She was dressed like a native gentleman of high rank. On her head she wore a turban, in front of which there was a diamond and emerald aigrette, over the immense folds of her hair, which fell on her shoulders. The folds of her dress, on neck, and arms, wrist and waist, revealed jewels of price, and even on her boots there glittered spurs set with gems.

“And is it thus we meet, my son, after so many years of absence?” she asked, in a winning submissive tone. “Look at me, Terence! Will you not look at your own mother? What wrong have I done you? Am I thus deprived of the sole ray of hope which reconciled me to life the first time you see me?”

“I *have* seen you before, madam,” I gasped; “I saw you the night you rode into our camp with your robbers, and carried away the wounded man. I know all about you, too. Yes! I have heard of your doings till I am sick; and I tell you now that it will be my duty to see you do not escape—that is,—I think I ought not to let you go. I am an officer——”

My voice choked me. I could not proceed.

“ ‘ You are an officer,’ and you were going to say you would arrest me. I thought you were only a doctor. *I* am quite safe here. It is *you* who are in danger. But not a hair of your head shall be touched. Do whatever you like, only be reasonable, my son. Come ! Do not shrink from me. At least, let us understand what is between us to cause a quarrel. Let us sit down. It is Kismet that wills our meeting. There is no fear of interruption. Mohun !” she added, in Hindostanee, “ tell Azimoolah I shall not be ready for some time. Let him see the sentries keep a good watch, to warn us if they are moving in the camp.”

I turned my head from her still, but ah ! I did not resist, as she led me to the sofa, fondling my hand in hers.

“ How tall you are !” she said, “ but not so strong as you promised to be. You look unhappy. I wish you would let me take a good peep at your face again. What ! not one little peep ?”

She passed her arm round my waist. I felt the scales of her armour as she leant her head on my shoulder. I gently pushed her away.

“ After so many years you thus reject your poor broken-hearted mother. Be it so,” she said, with a sigh of resignation. “ I cannot help it. What are you angry with me for ? What have I done ?”

No answer.

“Is it because I did not go with you to misery and poverty, but preferred being away for a little, that I might make you rich?”

No answer. That wonderful voice spoke again.

“Terence! your father deceived me. He told me I should be rich, and I—riches were all I thought of. Do you know, or care to know, why? Will you listen while I tell you what my life has been? Oh, Terence! why *should* I not have made wealth my only object? Yes! When I was a neglected child, running wild among natives in my father’s compound, I was so nursed in poverty, and ground down in it, that I believe if the most hideous djin came to me ere I was sixteen years old, and said, ‘Mary Billing, if you marry me, I will give you untold gold, but you shall be damned when you die,’ I would not have hesitated a moment. You shrink from me again! But *you* don’t know what it is to be a poor white in India; to be a woman—a lady—and to be scorned and trampled on! I was beautiful—so much the worse for me. But could I help it?—And the more noticed and petted I was the more pain I felt. My poor miserable father! How he was jeered at and ridiculed for his poverty, and made a jest of in every station over India!

How I cursed them when night after night he was brought to our wretched home the most horrid of all beasts—a human being maudlin and drunk ! I was taken out as ornament to evening parties by your fine ladies, and I heard for ever in my ears—‘Daughter of poor Beery Billing, you know.’ I had dresses given to me in charity : I lived on charity, when my hapless father died. I had no education—no religion—as you call it. Ram and Shiva, Mahomet and the Virgin, Vishnu and the Trinity—were all mingled in my head together. Who taught me anything ? The teaching I received, was the groundwork of the gossip of the bazaar, and of my early life among native servants, or the sayings and doings of the cantonment. I had one tutor—his name was Want, and it was bare cold charity alone saved me from starvation or worse. And I looked around the world whilst I was yet a child—for I could see in my own way ; and I saw that whilst you all pretend that you worship God, your idol is Gold. What did you all come to India for ? For the good of the natives, whose temples you let go to ruin, whose tanks you allow to fall into decay, whose works perish before your eyes, without a thought for their feelings or a regard for their wounded pride ?—Bosh ! The young misses came to be married to gold, and the men

came to get gold. Do you make what you call your improvements for the love of the natives, or of gold? Are they not to improve commerce, and to enable you to control the country all the better by force, as you can't do it by love, that you may turn it to profit still? You talk of the zenanahs and harems, and habits of the people—pah! I tell you, Terence, I know them, and I know, too, what are the manners of our stations. I have been told what Christian princes and nobles are, and I swear to you the great difference between you and them is, that you are hypocrites and that they are not. Well! I resolved to be rich—to be so at any cost. Your father—a brave, wild-brained fellow—was not rich, I knew, but he would succeed to Lough-na-Carra, and he might have Kilmoyle. He swore it to me. I had lovers innumerable, but I looked at them only in one way—what they had to bring me. I openly announced that as my principle. Of them all I cared for only one, and he is now the being I most hate! You know him. When I think I at one time loved him, it makes me doubt my being the same creature.”

“And Sir Denis Desmond? You say nothing of him, madam.” The scales of the steel corset grated as her bosom heaved.

“Denis Desmond! *You* have heard that, then?

Woman that I am, what would I not give to meet you once more, Denis! And we will—I know it.”

The tigress was becoming aroused; I moved away a little from her.

“No; hear me out, Terence Brady! Denis Desmond insulted and wronged me, and by his cruelty caused my life to be what you see it! He it was who caused my father’s claims on Oude to be rejected by the Government! He it was who had my father turned forcibly out of the station by jeering chuprassees as a public cheat—who trampled on the old man—Colonel Billing, a gentleman and a soldier—in his insolent pride, as if he were a mehter or a pariah! In the old man’s crying fits he was always blubbering about satisfaction from Desmond, and cursing him; and asking me to avenge him; and in my childish sorrow I vowed to aid him, for I loved that poor drunken fond old man. At this time the great Commissioner had not seen me. When he did, he was my slave. I never can forget my triumph! But he was not an abject slave, this insolent clerk—what better was he? He talked of moderation, proposed my remaining for two or three years in a state of seclusion with some friends of his—till ‘I completed my education,’ forsooth!—of allowances and pocket-money. I kept *that* string to my bow

for the pleasure of *cutting* it." She paused for a moment and startled me with a laugh. "He had his revenge, and in this very place too, my son. Desmond is clever! Have you heard what he did?"

"I know the story, madam; I wonder you allude to it. When I tell you I have heard everything about your residence here, perhaps you will spare yourself and me these shameful details."

"Shameful! What do you mean, Terence Brady! There's nothing to be ashamed of—no, nothing!" she exclaimed, fiercely, "nothing except my own idiotic folly in giving way to my most foolish love for that most vile of villains, Alan Fraser. If you think me to blame for leaving you, blame him. If you think me to blame for all I have done or ever can do, blame him! Aye, and curse him too! He was my evil genius; the Wicked One has not a blacker heart. He put it into my head to send you home; I had some jewels and some little money left, and he swore he would make me rich, and that he would treat you as his son. Well, I listened, and was lost. Our marriage, as I believed it, was kept a secret, but not so the marriage he made soon after we arrived at Hyderabad with a girl whose ugliness was so great, no one but Charley would face it, notwithstanding all her rupees. And when I claimed my position, and

I, who was about to be a mother, demanded to be acknowledged as his wife, the ruffian overwhelmed me by the enormity of his infamy and the greatness of my ruin. Whatever I may have been before, I became then—— what I am.”

She burst into tears, and sobbed bitterly.

“’Tis her art,” thought I——“do not be deceived.”

After a little she went on:——“I was stupefied. I was ignorant, friendless: I had no one to go to. I would have appealed to Denis Desmond, but his last letter cut me to the quick. The proofs of my folly and of Fraser’s deceit were too plain. Charley had played his game; he had hired a deserter named Shorter to act as a priest; he had taken all my little hoard. I will not tell you, my son, what proposals he made to me. But whatever you have heard, believe what I swear to you, that from that instant Fraser and I were apart for ever, and that on my side there was a hate which not the lives of a thousand such as he could satiate.”

“He is a cursed villain. But I entreat you, madam, to speak like a woman.”

“Like a woman I speak, my son—a wronged and outraged woman, who is the scorn of her children and their shame, but who has still a woman’s feelings and a mother’s heart”——(the cuirass creaked again). “I accepted his offer to be presented to the

Rajah of Auripore. It opened me a chance of escape from the wretch I detested. I could sing and play, and knew the poems and verses which the native princes like. You need not draw back nor start! You need not, I tell you, Terence, be ashamed of me, or of him! That poor, plundered, outraged Prince, was a gentleman and a man of honour! I wish my Christian friends were like him. But he was rendered miserable by the dégradation imposed on him. He was brave and generous, fond of the chase, and longed for an active career worthy of the descendant of a line of soldier-kings. You offered him a chance in a native regiment, in which he might, if lucky, become a captain, and yet be subject to the impertinence of the latest-imported white-faced boy! Civilization and Christianity came to him in the shape of brandy, tobacco, and French prints; and a man who might have filled a place in the history of his country died an unknown half-idiotic sot! But, Terence, he married me by all the rites sacred in his eyes and in the eyes of his people! And he made me Ranee of Auripore. I had a right to adopt a child, as he had a right to marry me. And Denis Desmond robbed me of my right! What are treaties—what——”

“I am not prepared to argue the point,” I interrupted. “Is it not enough to know they have

been decided finally years ago? Who was it, madam, who made an attempt on the life of Sir Denis Desmond, and who was a murderer in intent? Will you answer me that?"

"If you mean me," she replied, haughtily, "I say you are wrong. But suppose it were, had I not just cause? You don't think so. Then there never was justice executed on a plunderer and a robber. But I tell you it was not I, though Fraser I dare say persuaded Sir Denis it was. Ask who planned the deed, and who, if it had succeeded, was prepared for a rising with his sowars and the pillage of the place, whilst he would have got rid of me and others, and I will answer—Alan Fraser!"

"But you were the associate of this man—you were for years the partner of his guilt?"

"Yes! I was aware of his guilt and his crimes; but what could I do? My name was gone. I was poor. I, at any hazard, must be rich, and I used him as my tool whilst he thought he was using me. For oh, Terence! much as you may doubt it, I loved my children. When, by that villain's cruelty, I found my infant daughter was to be branded with a name which would bring on her the scorn of the world—I could not bear that my child should be punished for her mother's folly! There were ways

and means of doing it. I executed a plan which I have ever since repented. I had the children changed whilst the woman who called herself Mrs. Fraser was on her dying bed. Mabel Fraser and you are sisters."

"I know it, madam. It was a pretty trick. And what, may I ask you, became of the child you took away?"

"It died young. I have heard my father say that whom the gods love die young. Oh! I assure you I took every care of it! The poor little creature was swept over with its nurse when you were saved. Will you believe it? Alan Fraser could tell it is true. For more than a month I scarcely slept or cared for life till the news came that you were safe. I laughed at the grief over my supposed loss. But that stratagem bound me to the author of all my misery! He refused to let me see my child unless I lent myself to his plots. And I was made his puppet and his creature, and exposed to the contumely of every station at which we were—falsely and most injuriously. Oh! swear me on the most sacred books—he could not deny it! He sought to force from me the money I had acquired from my second husband, the Rajah—he threatened to accuse me of the attempt on the Resident's life, of the murder of his own wife by poison—of the

murder of the stolen child. But I was becoming more of a match for him. I put my treasure beyond his control, and settled it on you, my son! Yes! on *you*, every penny except a few thousand rupees to Mabel! She was taught not to care for me, and she will come into property by right of her mother. Is not that well done? In the event of your death all would go to Mabel—to trustees, at least; my London lawyers made all that secure. I was his last hope;—and oh, ye gods! how I enjoyed my revenge! Can you blame me, my son? Oh! his rage when he discovered he was deceived in his turn now. He had relied on the Rajah's money to pay his debts. He was disgraced—brought to court-martial, and ruined, as he had ruined many a better man. In the crash Sir Denis took poor Mabel; Charley Fraser hated me too much to give me the pleasure of keeping my daughter—I could not insist on it. How did I know how she might look on a mother who did not bear her father's name? I was reconciled by the idea of the fair, pretty child—who is somewhat like me—making a good match; I thought now and then of her marrying Denis Desmond's nephew and becoming mistress of Kilmoyle. You see it would be a little revenge on Sir Denis when he knew who *she* was, if she married Gerald Desmond! I abandoned the idea I

entertained of proving your title to the estates by the advice of my lawyers; but I bought you, Terence, a place not far off, as you will find when Mrs. Allayne's trustees execute her will. Charley Fraser did not threaten; but I knew his black heart, and when he started for Europe the first time I was sure your life was not safe. He calculated that if anything happened to you I would leave my money to my daughter Mabel and he might get the use of it. He was then menaced on all sides. You had an escape. I followed Fraser to Ireland the second time. He was now a desperate criminal. When I employed others to guard you I had nigh lost you. He knew the ways of Europe and I did not, and he very nearly capped all his outrages as I was taking steps to deliver him to justice. But oh, Terence! he struck me a cruel blow in his flight. He carried off my daughter—he has her in his power, and although I have saved her lover's life, I fear now his last act of villany is yet to be done, when all seems lost for us."

"Mabel Fraser is safe, madam. She is now with Sir Denis Desmond in camp over there."

The Rance looked at me—her eyes fixed with an expression of alarm and doubt. She passed her hand over her brow.

"So! It is so, then? I would not have done

it, wretch that he is, had I known Mabel was free. It is too late now—Kismet!——Tell me, Terence, how know you this?”

“But a few nights ago I was carried off, bound hand and foot, and cast into a dungeon in the fortress of Roab.”

“Yes! Fraser was there with the Nawab! He wanted Mabel to sacrifice herself to him, and I was resolved to see her free, and in doing so it might be necessary—to dispose of him. And he seized on you too? Oh, he plotted well indeed! My two children in his power, he thought he was sure of me! Miserable traitor and villain!—his plots are over now! Feroze never breaks his word.” She sat with her eyes on the ground. “Is it not most strange,” she said, as if to herself, “that Mabel should restore Terence to his people—that she should meet Sir Denis Desmond in a jungle in India! within a few hours! And that they are now a few miles apart from me!”

She leant with her head on one hand, and the forefinger resting on the angle of her lip—her eyes fixed in sad abstraction on the lamp. Her other hand crept gently to my arm, slid up—and up—till her fingers played idly in my hair.

“It is Kismet,” she sighed. “You do not believe in Kismet? Whatever happens is Kismet or

Fate. But none can tell what will take place, and Fate is *only* Fate when it has been accomplished. Ah! who can say what fate is in store for me? I feel my last hour is not far distant." Her lip quivered and her eye moistened. "But I can meet it now. My children are safe—I fear my persecutors no more!"

"Mother!" cried I, in excessive grief and passionate pity, "come! come with me. Fly from these wretches—murderers, rebels, and assassins. Come with me, I entreat you—they will pardon you—Sir Denis will forgive you. Come and live with your children. Do; on my knees I implore you. For the love of Heaven!"

The poor, lonely, sinful woman—how can I tell how she was wronged?—pressed her lips upon my forehead, and pressed back my hair to look into my face.

"There is comfort in this, indeed!" It was a voice which sighed like the last trill of some sweet song. "I feel as if my death would be happier if it could be now—now, in your arms. But no, I could not live among you even if I would, my children. Terence! it is no use," she added firmly. "My outlandish ways would not be your ways. I have seen your country. It cannot be mine. My reputation would cling to me. But what am I talking

of? I *cannot* leave my people, Terence. I am a Queen! I have sworn an oath; I will not and cannot prove false to it, and I must live and die among my people. I tell you why I came here—It was Kismet which willed our meeting, although I was not going to let you leave India without telling you my story in my own way, and seeing you, my son! Our cause is lost. In this room there is enough of treasure to render me rich—to support my followers. I am going to seek refuge in Nepaul. The Russian Prendergast, whom you know—poor Mab fell in love with him whilst he was commanding the Nawab of Roab's levies—is, I hope, safe there already. When I pounced upon your camp it was in order to save him—that was all my doing, and well done, I think, too!—I heard he had been wounded in a squabble between my people and the Nawab's, and had fallen into your hands. They suspected him of treachery, and perhaps they were right. In fact he was fainthearted in the cause; he was disgusted with our cruelties, he said, and Fraser's conduct made him look on himself with horror. He does not care much for dear Mab, I fear, but she tended him when he was all but dead, and gratitude is as mighty as love. As soon as his wounds are healed he will go to the United States. Well, Terence, well? Do you not pity me now?

Do you hate me still? Oh, my son! But for *that* I would care no more for life!"

My heart was too full to speak. I had been warned against her falsehood and her wiles; and yet I could not refuse some credence to her tale. And her voice came to me through the night as I sat by her side, with our hands interlocked, and her head on my shoulder—drinking in her words, and trying in vain to harden my lips into "madam" once more—to give stern counsel—and withdraw from her embrace.

Mohun—now a very white, fat old man, but Mohun still—came once or twice, and looked in. At last he came with clasped hands and said—

"Highness! Didn't I tell you Master Derry grow fine gentleman and love his mother? But it is time to go now. Sowar very cross. Maybe the fong* come on us after Master Derry."

"Mohun is right," she said. "How time has passed! They will be uneasy about you. See, it is almost daybreak. You will come to see me, my son, wherever I am before you leave India? And then, if I escape and am alive, we will see what can be done. If Fate wills we are not to meet, you will think of me with some pity? Will you not,

* Army.

Terence, my son? Mohun, let my son have my horse, and I will ride Jal. Nay,—I have two here, Terence! And when you are on ‘Flowing-water’ you will have a beast fit for the son of the Ranee of Auripore. Alas! alas! that we must part!”

Was I weak, or ought I to have torn myself out of the arms that were thrown around me, and turned away my face from the tearful kisses which fell upon my brow and neck?

It was indeed the dawn. Escorted by old Mohun, who bathed my hand with his tears as he pointed out the way to the camp, I passed by a black-bearded sowar, on sentry. “Flowing-water” was, indeed, a beauty, but my saddle and housings were eccentric—gorgeous—and after a canter of a mile I espied with some uneasiness a small troop of cavalry approaching me. They quickened their pace. I had half a mind to put the Arab on his mettle, but thought better of it; and presently I was saluted by the officer in command of the party of Carabineers—

“Is your name Brady, sir; surgeon Bengal Tigers?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Why, there has been quite an alarm in camp

about you, as you were, we hear, carried off once before! There are parties out in all directions! The Commissioner is in a great state, and so are the two young ladies."

"Two young ladies! What ladies?"

"You have not heard? All the women and children shut up in Beel arrived safe and sound last night. Miss Butler—a deuced fine girl—Sir Denis Desmond's niece, among them. What a splendid horse you're on! Rather a rum turn-out, isn't it?"

My heart fluttered with joy.

"I shall go into camp, and ease all anxiety about me. I suppose you will return with me?"

"No; not till we have been in Auripore. My orders are to go there and look for you."

"Here I am! no use in going now. I have just been there rummaging about the place."

"Well, perhaps you're right; but——"

My soul sank within me as a subaltern came up and said—

"I think I can make out some rebel sowars sneaking away by the wall there. Look over there, Forster!"

The officer looked through his glass.

"Not a doubt of it!" he exclaimed. "Frank, it may be this very Rance of Auripore Sir Denis is so

anxious to get hold of! She's dodging somewhere in the neighbourhood. He has special orders from Government about her. Now, men, keep your horses well in hand. Make no prisoners unless you see a woman!"

The Carabineers were off in pursuit, and I was left alone staring after them overwhelmed. I relied on the vigilance of the sowars. I recollected it was some way from the palace to the outskirts of the town. The Carabineers were lost in a dip of the ground under Auripore. A pistol shot—two! three! four! a little volley reached me. I touched Flowing-water with the stirrup edge, and away we slid over the plain. In the dip lay a dead Carabineer and a wounded sowar. Our men were just ahead of me after the enemy, who had scattered over the plain to lead them away from an elephant which was making at full speed for the river.

Beside the elephant there were two natives riding close together. Even at that distance I recognised the Ranee and old Mohun. I saw she was poorly mounted now. Three of the Carabineers, singling out the party, dashed after them full speed. They gained on them. I urged my horse, and he flew like the lightning. Ah! a trooper rises in his stirrups! Poor old Mohun—he turned and drew

his tulwar to save his mistress. I saw him with his white hair soaked in blood, as Flowing-water cleared him on the ground. I was close on the horsemen, the elephant, and the two Carabineers. The foremost, with a savage dig of his spur, struck at the Ranee as he brought up his horse alongside. The sword snapped in his hand. Ere he could recover, he fell wounded from his saddle, and the dauntless woman turning discharged the second barrel at the trooper close behind her.

“Stop!” I screamed. “Don’t fire; it’s a woman! Oh! Mother, halt! *I* am here! For God’s sake——”

“Damn her! she’s shot Sergeant Scales!”

I strove to dash the pistol aside. The bullet sped.

* * * * *

That I could ever shed tears for *her*! That for a space in my life I should have no thought for my Mary—that I should forget her, and have no prayer to offer up to Heaven for her safety! And kneel beside the idol of my early life, with all my boyish love back a hundredfold!—it seemed the strangest of all my dreams! And yet it was true!

“Terence, dear, do not give way so! Oh, do not grieve, my son! It is better it should be so!

It is too late now to wish it, but I would have liked to have lived a little longer, and to have seen you and Mab once more. Was I not near getting away? There is the Raptee! There, you see, is Nepaul. Millions of miles away from me. Hearken, Terence the jewels belong to you. Oh, the pain!"

"I am glad," she murmured, "you have a tear for me after all! But the treasure! Don't let them take the treasure! Mabel!—Forgive me my sins, oh Heaven!"

* * * * *

"Och then, Mick, wasn't it a sin to shoot the poor lady? Old Scales is as mad as any of us about it, though she put her mark on him. Did you ever see such a face as that before. And *that's* the Ranee of Auripore! Well! *I* wouldn't believe it if all the newspapers in India swore it, she ever did a cruel thing in her life. Oh, dear, dear! isn't the young doctor broken-hearted about her!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANCHORED.

As I bring my story—very strange, but very true—to a close, and think over the troubled years which were mine—as I call to mind the storms which the much-buffed ship, now moored in calm waters, has encountered—I can scarce believe that it is not all one of the many dreams I have dreamt in my life. And I look about me. There is Lough-na-Carra in the distance, and here is the ivy-crested tower of Kilmoyle, and before me are the scenes in which my childhood was spent! A silver-haired, stern-faced old man sits in an easy-chair at the window, with his desk before him. He is writing a paper on “The Land Question in Ireland Considered, by Sir Denis Desmond, G.C.B.,” in which he “considers the question” as settled by the precedent and results of the former settlement of Auripore.

“Do you remember, Terence!” he calls out through the open window, “whether the Governor-

General included Auripore in the second Oude settlement, when Outram recommended Maun Sing and the Eastern Talookdars to be guaranteed their rights by express regulations?"

"I do not, Sir Denis—not exactly at this moment. I think Auripore came under the settlement, and was made over to the Kotwal of that village where we spent such a warm morning. Ask Mary; she recollects everything."

"And it is well I do, Terence," says a young person near me. "It is nearly time to send over the carriage for Gerald and Rose—that is one thing I remember. *You* know I dread India and its memories, though so much happiness dates from that visit. By-the-bye, whilst you were at the river to-day—I really am disposed to think there's a pet naiad somewhere in those salmon-pools—I had such a nice letter from Mabel! She has sent me a photograph of their little son. Isn't he pretty? A look of Terry about him, I think, and he has his mother's hair." And here her voice sinks into a whisper as she looks towards Sir Denis and puts her mouth very, very close to my cheek—

"Don't be so ridiculous, Mary!"

"Why won't you listen then, Terence? Don't interrupt!"—This is louder: then very low—

“Mabel wishes to remind you of your promise to send her over the copy of the picture you had at school. She has not quite got over the shock of her father’s miserable fate. She will have it he did not commit suicide, but that Azimoolah Khan and Feroze made away with him. Why do you always turn so pale when *he* is spoken of? And there is Mr. Bates shaking his head so. Poor Mabel! Otherwise she is happier than I could have anticipated; her husband’s health and spirits improve gradually.”

“Tell Mab it shall be sent the next steamer after she hears from us. Or, stay! Admiral Jack, you know, has sent us an invitation to go out to the North American station. It’s only a step from Halifax to ‘Babylon City, Cherubusco Co., Minnesota.’ And near ‘Babylon City’ is ‘Content,’ where our exiles have hung up their harps. I think next month I shall go out and see them and carry the picture with me. It would be worth while going so far to see such a change in that contrite savage anti-Saxon Maurice.”

Mary’s eyes filled up as she said, softly, “I believe it was I who converted him to common sense and Christianity. Poor Colonel Prendergast! He was a patriot run mad. But as to your trip

to Content, Terence, I warn you I am against it."

"Mary, you're a despot. Not to 'Content'?"

"No! If you go I will go too! And then what will Sir Denis do for his portable dictionary? And what will Mr. Bates do for his general referee? Besides, it's not necessary: Admiral Jack will soon be coming home to visit us. If Mabel and Maurice desire to see us, we can afford ourselves the treat, particularly if you don't keep up quite such an army of dependents and pensioners. Here come Rose and Gerald."

"But, Mary—come back for a moment—Admiral Jack says the fishing is——"

"No, Terence, you have had quite enough of fishing. And in such troubled waters too. Mr. Bates! *Don't* you agree with me?"

The old man smiles. "Agree with you! Can I ever do anything else? No, Terence! I'll help Mary to her writ of *ne exeat regno*. She and I think you have had enough of adventures to last you a lifetime. So does the baby! And so does Sir Denis. You are anchored at last."





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